12514 aa 6

THE NEW CLARISSA:

A TRUE HISTORY.

BY

MADAME DE BEAUMONT.

VOL. I.

BRITISH MUSEUM

THE

NEW CLARISSA:

A

TRUE HISTORY.

BY

MADAME DE BEAUMONT.

le Prince de Beaumont

VOLUME THE FIRST.

LONDON:

Printed for J. NOURSE, Bookfeller to His MAJESTY,
oppofite Catharine-Street, in the Strand.

MDCC LXVIII.

BRITISH MUSEUM

THE NEW CLARISSA: A TRUE HISTORY.

LETTER I.

CLARISSA TO LADY HARRIET.

TO loſe at the ſame time an aunt, whom I always regarded as the beſt of mothers, and a friend who might have aſſuaged my afflictions, by a tender ſympathy with them, is more than your Clariſſa is able to ſupport; and I am oppreſſed to a degree that might be taken for inſenſibility. I paſſed the two days which followed my dear aunt's death in a ſtupid ſilence. Staring wildly without ſeeing, liſtening without hearing,

and in a perfect indifference about what was going to become of me.

You know my parents were ſtrangers to me: I never was with them from three years old; and my father's hatred for his reſpectable ſiſter, did not ſuffer him to keep up the ſmalleſt correſpondence with her. My aunt often told me that I had a mother worthy of my utmoſt tenderneſs, and of a happier lot than ſhe experienced; ſhe even aſſured me that her ſiſter in law had ſubſiſted purely by her bounty; and not only ſo, but, that ſhe was obliged to aſſiſt her in ſecret; that is to ſay, under a falſe name. Theſe diſcourſes often inſpired me with a ſtrong deſire to be acquainted with my mother, and an apprehenſion yet more lively of falling into the power of a father who was painted to me in ſuch terrible colours. You have more than once been witneſs to my ſentiments with reſpect to theſe two points, and it was natural that they ſhould be felt with moſt force in the moment when my deſires and fears were going to be realized. Grief, however, was able to abſorb them.

Seated in ſilence near the precious relicks of my beloved aunt, the confuſion which reigned in her houſe was not ſufficient to rouze me from

from my lethargy. Officers of juſtice, friends, diſtant relations, were about me in crowds. The firſt, ſealing up every thing, took the keys, and gave the neceſſary orders to haſten the arrival of my father, and the dean of Colborne, to whom my aunt had intruſted her will; the ſecond did their utmoſt to recall my ſpirits, and ſerved me in ſome meaſure as a guard againſt the malice of the laſt, who evidently looked upon me with fury, in the fear that my aunt might have conſidered my advantage at their expence; for they could not perſuade themſelves but ſhe muſt have excluded my father from the number of her heirs.

Lady Horton, who has always honoured me with ſo much friendſhip, made many uſeleſs efforts to draw me from a ſpectacle which nouriſhed my deſpair. I ſhrieked as often as they attempted to take me away; but the third day, my exhauſted ſpirits had left me in a ſtate of ſuch weakneſs, that they had little difficulty to make uſe of the opportunity to tranſport me to the houſe of that generous lady, who ſoon ſucceeded in rendering my grief more tranquil, without diminiſhing its force.

As my father is in Ireland, it muſt neceſſarily be a conſiderable time before he can ar-

rive; and in the interval, I receive great comfort from the viſits of the dean of Colborne, who has made me aſhamed of the exceſs of my ſorrow, in ſhewing me that I diſhonoured the triumph of a perſon who had been ſo dear to me, and who, from the height of heaven, where her eminent virtues no doubt have now placed her, might reproach me with the little profit I had drawn from her wiſe leſſons, upon the manner in which mortals ought to receive the ſtrokes that come from God.

As ſoon as he perceived me in a ſtate to liſten to what he had orders to tell me, he ſpoke as follows: "That which I owe," ſaid he, "to the memory of your deceaſed aunt, obliges me to juſtify to you her laſt diſpoſitions. If hate had cauſed the diſtance in which ſhe lived, with regard to your father, and ſhe died in ſentiments ſo little Chriſtian, we ſhould have nothing more to do than to mourn for her eternal loſs: but how far was ſhe from ſuch a malignant ſpirit!——To make you ſenſible of this, and to engage you to conduct yourſelf according to the views of her who was every thing to you, I find myſelf obliged to ſet before you ſome things which preceded your birth: things which, indeed, I would willingly bury

in oblivion, was it in my power; and I could do it without hurt or detriment to you."

I flattered myſelf, my dear Harriet, that I ſhould have ſufficient ſtrength to finiſh a recital, which will make you weep over the fate of your poor Clariſſa; but it has made an impreſſion upon me, which has froze my heart and my ſenſes: I am obliged, therefore, to defer the dreadful tale for the ſubject of another letter.

LETTER II.

CLARISSA TO LADY HARRIET.

I Take up my pen in continuation, and am now going to tell you what I learned from the mouth of our good dean; and as I have not had an opportunity to diſpatch my former letter, I will ſend this under the ſame cover. The dean ſpeaks.

"Mr. Darby, your father, is born of an opulent family, which for a long time was apprehenſive of the extinction of a very ancient name. Your late aunt was born the firſt year of your grandfather's marriage; and the diſpleaſure of having a daughter, was balanced only by the hope that a ſecond birth would bleſs him with a ſon; but eight years rolling away without that bleſſing arriving, your grandfather conceived a vexation upon it, of which your aunt became the victim: he had an averſion for her, the more ſhocking, as, in her then ſtate of infancy, ſhe promiſed all ſhe afterwards fulfilled in figure, underſtanding and goodneſs of heart. It is true, that her mother recompenced her, as far as ſhe could, for the ſtrange hatred of her father; ſhe loved her with tenderneſs, and gave her all the marks of

it

it in her power; but, poor infant, the birth of your father, deprived her even of that comfort, and raviſhed from her the affections of all the family. Your aunt, born with extreme ſenſibility, felt the alteration of behaviour towards her, and was ſo afflicted by it, that the goodneſs of her conſtitution could not ſupport her: ſhe fell dangerouſly ill, and they did not fail to attribute it to envy and jealouſy. Indeed, they would have been ſo glad of an opportunity to leave all the wealth of the family to the new-born ſon, that they abandoned his ſiſter wholly to the care of nature; and it was probably the excellence of her temperament that ſaved her life. To the great regret of her parents, the marriage contract had ſettled twenty thouſand pounds ſterling upon younger children; and your grandmother giving little hopes of future iſſue, it was with pain they ſaw the inheritance of their adored ſon likely to be diminiſhed by the payment of ſo conſiderable a portion. In order therefore, if poſſible, to prevent what they conſidered as a misfortune, they ſent your aunt into France, where they put her in a convent; hoping, that, in time, ſhe would have an inclination to take the veil. Your aunt has herſelf often told me, that a religious life was the deareſt object of her deſires, and the end of all her

prayers: but they were put up in vain; for as ſhe was in a ſociety of truly pious nuns, the hopes of the great ſum which her parents offered with her, could not engage them to deceive their young penſioner: on the contrary, they encouraged her to withſtand all the threats and arguments which her friends uſed, to make her forſake the world; ſhe remained among them till ſhe was ſeventeen, and her parents informed her that ſhe muſt expect to ſtay there till her brother was ſettled. As ſhe was happy, it was an exile which ſhe had little reluctance to ſubmit to, but it was not of ſo long a duration as they had endeavoured to make her fear it would. Her father and mother died in a ſhort ſpace, one after the other; and, in the mean time, the brother of the prioreſs, who had brought her up, arrived from the Indies; he was a man fifty-five years old, who came into his own county to enjoy an immenſe fortune, the fruits of his induſtry abroad: the guardians of your aunt called her into England, and Mr. Harvey was intruſted with the care of tranſporting her thither: it was in this ſhort ſpace that he conceived the deſign of making her his wife; and as ſhe found in him all the qualities which conſtitute the honeſt man and the good chriſtian, the diſproportion of ages had nothing to frighten her youthful mind, who

was

was apprehenſive that her guardians, ſome of whom were not Roman catholics, would force her to marry a man of another religion than that which her anceſtors profeſſed, and ſhe herſelf had been educated in. Her relations made great difficulties about the conditions; and, under pretence that the affairs of the family were in diſorder, demanded a certain time for the payment of the portion. Harvey was too much in love to ſuffer that obſtacle to delay his happineſs: in ſhort, he married your aunt, and agreed to wait for her fortune till his wife ſhould be of age. The young man now began to ſhew a character from which every thing was to be apprehended. I ſpeak of your father, my dear Clariſſa; and my reſpect for your juſt delicacy, will make me ſuppreſs whatever is not abſolutely neceſſary for you to be acquainted with: let it ſuffice to tell you that he went abroad; and that, to a nature not well diſpoſed, he added the additional misfortune of falling into the hands of a governor who had no principles of religion, and during their tour aſſociated only with men of his own caſt: his manners correſponded with his faith; and at two and twenty years old he returned your father into England, after having diſſipated at leaſt one half of his paternal fortune. This laſt circumſtance, however, not being generally known,

Mr. Darby paſſed for a conſiderable match; and Lord Aſaph, who was but ill in his affairs, endeavoured at a marriage between him and his daughter. Ah! my dear Clariſſa, how worthy was ſhe of a better choice! In ſpite of the brilliant figure of her intended huſband, ſhe felt a diſguſt for him, which ſhe combated in vain: and ſhe would have preferred death to his hand, if the election had been left to herſelf: too timid, however, to reſiſt the deſpotic orders of a father, whom ſhe had always ſeen terrible to his children, ſhe overcome her repugnance. You were born the firſt year of her nuptials, and her tenderneſs for you was her only comfort. In the mean time, your aunt was become a widow. Mr. Harvey having left her conſiderable poſſeſſions, ſhe ſignified to your father that ſhe would give him longer time for the payment of what he owed her; but this condeſcenſion did in no ſort diminiſh the hate which he had for his ſiſter, and he gave her proofs of it, as often as it was in his power. He had dragged after him into England an Iriſh girl, whom he had run away with from one of his friends, whoſe miſtreſs ſhe was. As he was fearful ſuch a connection might be prejudicial to his eſtabliſhment, he kept it concealed till after his marriage; but ſcarce was that concluded, when he propoſed this woman to his lady as a

perſon

perſon proper to have the care of her houſe, of which ſhe ſoon became the ſcandal. Your mother ſaw herſelf reduced to receive from the hands of this wretch the ſmalleſt neceſſaries; and when ſhe preſumed to remonſtrate with her huſband, and ſhew him the evil light which ſuch a conduct muſt put him in with all good people, he treated her with a cruelty that ſometimes put her life in danger. All her reſource was in the friendſhip of her ſiſter-in-law. But her barbarous huſband ſuffered her not long to enjoy that: as great part of his eſtate was in Ireland, he informed her that ſhe muſt prepare to go with him there. You were, then three years old, and your virtuous mother had the mortification to ſee you confounded with two other children, which your father had by the creature he kept in his houſe. She ſhuddered leſt your morals ſhould be corrupted by ill example; and this fear being forcible enough to engage her to deprive herſelf of the pleaſure of bringing you up, ſhe determined that your aunt ſhould perform that office in her ſtead. Nothing more was neceſſary to make your father refuſe his conſent: his wife and ſiſter deſired it. Your worthy aunt, therefore, as I may ſay, bought you of him; ſhe gave him an acquittance for the twenty thouſand pounds he owed her, in conſequence of his ceding you to her for ever,

without his having any future right to exert the authority of a parent, in order to take you out of her hands. On this condition the affair was concluded: for fourteen years paſt Mrs. Harvey omitted nothing which might make your father alter his conduct, but in vain; twice ſhe paid conſiderable ſums to extricate him out of difficulties into which his extravagance had plunged him. New extravagance was the only conſequence: and ſhe was obliged to aſſiſt the indigence of your unfortunate mother, in ſecret, if we can call that woman unfortunate, who was able to draw from the adverſities of life the ineſtimable treaſure of all the virtues."

Here, my dear, is the horrible recital I have had from our good dean, which has thrown me into inexpreſſible perplexities. The chief is, the neceſſity under which I at firſt thought myſelf to hide from you the melancholy circumſtances to which your friend is reduced. Nothing ſhould have prevailed on me to merit the curſe of Ham for expoſing a father; and, I believe, this delicacy would have reſtrained my pen, if the dean had not aſſured me that you were already acquainted with the misfortunes of my mother, whom Mr. Balfour, your huſband, had known in Ireland. Indeed I recollected that, imme-

immediately before your departure, the fear you had of my falling into the hands of my father, was one of the motives for your prayers to Heaven for the prolongation of my aunt's life. As your diſcourſe was myſterious, and I little capable of reflection, at a time when grief for loſing you chiefly occupied my thoughts, what you ſaid made but a ſlight and ſhort impreſſion upon me: but, alas! the traces are renewed by the ſhocking lights which the doctor has been forced to throw upon them; and I now perceive, that it was out of tenderneſs for me you explained yourſelf by halves. But I take up too much of your time in talking of myſelf; and I ought to aſk of you, with your advice, a circumſtantial account of your new ſituation; if you are as happy as you ought to be, my misfortunes can never be complete; your felicity will be ſome compenſation for my own ſufferings. I do not know why my heart ſhould indulge ſuch melancholy preſages: would to Heaven I had nothing to apprehend but that poverty which I muſt neceſſarily be reduced to, if my aunt has not taken ſome care for my preſervation. Thank God I can make uſe of my needle, and I ſhall never conſider myſelf unfortunate, while I can live by my labour: the evils I have to fear are of a blacker dye. I will not examine them too attentively;

tentively; no, I will give you an example of that reliance on Providence, which I have ſo often recommended to your practice: it is the virtue proper to our ſex; brought up in the boſom of a family where we are generally cheriſhed, we are forced to tear ourſelves from it, to paſs under a ſtrange yoke, without being able to foreſee our fate. Men are not aſhamed to deſcend even to artifice, to deceive a poor victim, who ſacrifices to them all ſhe has dear; and they make her pay, during her whole life, for the reſtraint in which they are kept for a few months. I am perſuaded, that even the moſt reaſonable men have momentary humours from which women ſuffer much pain: and I aſſure you, like my dear aunt, I would chooſe a life of religious celibacy if God had left it to my choice. I have ſomewhere read, that if a noviciate was permitted in matrimony, few would become profeſſors: it is, notwithſtanding, the ſtate that God has allotted for the greateſt number, and we ought, in the firſt ſtep towards it, to take every juſtifiable method to render our burthen as light as poſſible. It is to this I exhort my dear Harriet: her exceſſive vivacity has need of an exordium a little ſerious. Your huſband paſſes for one of the beſt men in the world; but they ſay that he is of his country, and by no means belies the proverb,

" fierce

"fierce as a Scotſman." I own to you, of all faults, it is that I would ſupport moſt willingly in a huſband; becauſe a wife may avail herſelf of it on numberleſs occaſions; and there is nothing more eaſy than to avoid its ill conſequences; we need only reſpect him who is ſubject to it. I know this word reſpect has always ſhocked you. "Love one's huſband--agreed"--you have often ſaid. "But by what right would thoſe imperious creatures reduce us to a humiliating ſubjection?" No, my dear friend, ſubmiſſion to a huſband derogates not from the glory of the firſt woman in the world. In this caſe, reſpect, ſubmiſſion, are of divine inſtitution; and we may be aſſured that the more faithful we are in fulfilling our duty, the more we ſhall be reſpected in our turn; if I remember right, you were a little deaf to this leſſon the day we parted. It was in the time of your triumph, the mighty words were not yet pronounced; in a word, Mr. Balfour was but a lover. After the ſolemn Yes, the face of things changed. Have you ever made a remark which has not eſcaped me? I have ſeen few marriages, where the bridegroom, led by cuſtom, has not given the right hand to the bride in conducting her to the altar. That mark of reſpect is no longer in ſeaſon, the prieſt puts things in their proper order, and lets the

wife know the nature of the compact into which ſhe is going to enter, by making her change ſituation, and ſtand at the left hand of her huſband. Stay there, my dear, if you are willing to enjoy the privileges of a beloved companion; women never ſtrive to uſurp the right with impunity; and, was I married, I ſhould deſpiſe my huſband, if he was weak enough to cede it.

Do not forget in your anſwer to let me know in what uſeful and agreeable manner you paſs your time in the family, of which you now make a part, among a nation which has adopted you for its own. Fear not to be too particular, leſt you ſhould be tireſome. All things that intereſt you (in themſelves however trifling) muſt be of conſequence to me, and I cannot hear too much of them. As I am ignorant how long I ſhall ſtay here, pleaſe to addreſs your anſwer to the dean, who will ſend it to me wherever I am.

LETTER III.

LADY HARRIET TO CLARISSA.

WEEP, my dear Clariſſa; your tears are juſt, and I will moſt cordially mingle mine with them. If you have loſt an aunt who loved you with the tenderneſs of a mother, I hove loſt a friend, a protectreſs, to whom I owe the little I am. Let us honour her memory by following her counſels: I conſent; but do not go to puſh your heroiſm ſo far as to be willing to ſuffer from your family, what ſhe had the patience to bear from hers. I am perſuaded that my dear Mrs. Harvey would ſhortly have taken meaſures which you will be inſtructed in upon the opening of her will; and ſuffer not a filial piety, ill underſtood, to make you diſobey her. I would not write to you in this ſtile, had ſhe not ſaid to me ſeveral times, that ſhe hoped God would let her live long enough to ſee you well married; and that, for all the world, ſhe would not have you in the power of your father. A ſudden death, which ſhe had no reaſon to apprehend, has deprived her of the pleaſure ſhe wiſhed for; and, without doubt, prevented her telling yourſelf what were her views. I wait with impatience for the opening of her will, which will fix the fate of my

my dear friend. I am not ſurpriſed at the gloomy preſages that riſe in your mind; the ſorrowful ſpectacle you have lately ſeen, the multitude of tears you have ſhed, has dejected your ſpirits, and thrown you into a ſituation, where every thing appears clouded. I find that your diſpoſition has been contagious: for four and twenty hours, after the receipt of your letter I was loſt in the blackeſt melancholy. "What's the matter with you, my dear?" ſaid Mr. Balfour, when he came in to ſupper. "I left you at ſix o'clock in good health, and, at ten, you have the countenance of one who has been ſick a fortnight." I have received a letter, Sir. "My God, you make me tremble! May I beg of you, without indiſcretion, to communicate it?" No, Sir, I am not fool enough to provide you with arms againſt myſelf. Clariſſa makes a prodigious parade with her advice, but we muſt pardon every thing in her woeful ſituation. She has loſt her aunt.

Thoſe who read this little monologue, will accuſe me of having a bad heart, and ſmall feeling of our common loſs: they will deceive themſelves; I am, without doing you injuſtice, as much touched as you can be; but it is not in my nature to afflict myſelf in a ſerious manner; my heart

heart does not govern my tongue, you have often told me ſo: it is moved by the ſlighteſt of all imaginations, without, if I may ſo expreſs myſelf, my ſoul in the leaſt interfering; while that giddy tongue prattles without common ſenſe, conſidering the circumſtances I am in, my heart goes its train; and any one who could confront my diſcourſe with my ſentiments, would be aſtoniſhed at the contraſt. This remark is yours, my dear; ſo you cannot fail of finding it juſt: not becauſe you made it; but becauſe you never make any but ſuch as are well founded: it is a rule which one may regard as certain. However, as there are few rules without exceptions, I will tell you, by one means or other, to put you in the rank of ordinary beings, that you are abſolutely unreaſonable, when you ſpeak upon the duties of women. My good huſband! I am no longer unwilling to ſhew you miſs Clariſſa's letter, if you will be content to read what I am going to write myſelf, which is a counterpoiſon. Indeed I am but a ſimpleton, my lord and maſter will make a jeſt of my exception, and take your ſermon for good and valid. Well, ſo much the worſe for him, he had reaſon to expect my impertinencies, I apprized him of them, and if he thinks me capable of changing my ſkin, he will be miſtaken.

You

You have done very well, to get the better of the ſcruple, which would have occaſioned you to uſe reſerve with me about your father; I know him, as one may ſay, ſince, &c.

He was in the upper claſſes, when my huſband firſt went to ſchool, and he well remembers that Darby's morning anſwered directly to what his day afterwards turned out. Indeed, his evil courſes are ſo notorious, that there is no perſon within twenty miles of his eſtate who does not regard your reſpectable mother as a martyr. Come now, my dear, cry up gentleneſs in a wife: I doubt much, if your father had met one of my character, whether he would have puſhed his exceſſes to ſuch extremities. I would have ſent his doxy packing with well boxed ears, and thrown his baſtards out of the window at the riſque of whatever might have happened. If Heaven had ſent me into the world by means of ſuch parents, or given you a head and heart like mine, I would cry out to you to ſuccour your perſecuted mother: but I know her humour too well; her leſſons would be pernicious to you. Your ſoul, already humble and pliable, is but too willing to lay itſelf under the feet of oppreſſion; eſpecially, when the perſecutors are perſons whom duty has made it a law to reſpect. I admire you;

but

but take care leſt you make me admire you too much. Let us ſpeak ſeriouſly, my dear; If you could reaſonably expect to be able to comfort the ſorrows of your mother, I would tell you that it is your firſt and moſt ſacred devoir; but you have no right to flatter yourſelf with ſuch hopes; you would only aggravate her miſeries, by adding yours to them; ſpare her, then, that new ſpecies of torment, which might poſſibly be more inſupportable than any ſhe has yet experienced.

You deſire I would give you ſome deſcription of the country where I am ſettled. You are not in it, and that makes it terribly faulty in my eyes: they ſay, however, that Edinburgh contains a number of agreeable people; and ſuch an aſſertion is pardonable from thoſe who have not ſeen you; but when they have lived as I have, with the maſter-piece of the creation, they will do very well to follow the example of ſome devout Mahometans, who, on turning their backs to Mecca, tear out their eyes, becauſe the world affords nothing beſides worthy to be looked at. Stay, I have a charming thought come into my head; if the women here take airs upon themſelves, and join preſumption to middling qualities, if they dare to criticiſe my ſincerity, my petulance,

lance, I have a ſure means to rid myſelf of three parts in four of them. I will make Mr. Balfour go poſt, and bring you down by the ſame carriage; and then, ſlap, plant you in the middle of one of their moſt brilliant aſſemblies. What poor figures will our goddeſſes make! I cannot help laughing at them: this is the dagger which I keep in reſerve, to revenge myſelf if they have the misfortune to diſpleaſe me; you ſhall know it in my next letter; for to-morrow I make my entry into the capital of Scotland: the preparations for that ceremony force me to abridge; and perhaps it would not have been amiſs, had I thought on them before, to ſpare you the pain of ſo ſilly a letter: but to finiſh, like my uncle the baronet, "the fox muſt die in his ſkin." I am incapable of change, eſpecially in that perfect friendſhip which I vow to you.

LETTER

LETTER IV.

CLARISSA TO LADY HARRIET.

YOU are in the right, to put me in mind that your diſcourſe is not the expreſſion of your heart; without which, I ſhould really have been ſhocked at the levity of your letter: in ſhort, one muſt reſolve to love you ſuch as you are; and, to ſay the truth, the taſk is nothing hard for thoſe who know you as well as I. A grand ſcene of new events has opened upon me ſince my laſt letter; and, though you ſhould ſcold me, I cannot help telling you that I foreſee ſome happy concluſions; this father ſo terrible, is, to me the moſt tender in the world; and, my mother regards as a miracle of paternal affection the prodigious change that is wrought in him: but you are not ſatisfied with a general idea of things; you muſt have particulars: you ſhall.

It was the third day after my laſt letter, that I had the ineſtimable happineſs of finding myſelf in the arms of my parents. Scarcely had I began to enjoy the pleaſure of their embraces, when the dean called us into the great parlour, where all the family was aſſembled: ſhall I tell you? I could

could not help trembling when he broke the ſeals of the will. I had received with tranſport the careſſes of my father; had I not reaſon to fear that the tenderneſs he ſhewed me would ſuffer alteration, if my aunt ſhould have conſidered me with too much generoſity to his prejudice? In that inſtant, I wiſhed from the bottom of my heart to depend always upon him, to whom I owed my life; and if I had been miſtreſs of the fatal teſtament, I believe, I ſhould have thrown it into the fire without reading it. I deſired a copy from the dean, and I ſend one to you; that is to ſay, of thoſe articles which regard me.

"I APPOINT for my univerſal heir, Clariſſa Darby, my niece; and I will, that, on the day of my death, ſhe ſhall be put in poſſeſſion of all my effects, jewels, ready money; and, in a word, of all my perſonal eſtate. In reſpect to my eſtates in houſes, lands, &c. I nominate the dean of Colborne for her guardian, to regulate and take care of the ſame; the entire diſpoſition of which ſhall be given up to my niece, the day ſhe attains the age of one and twenty, compleat, unleſs ſhe ſhall before that age marry a man who is, like herſelf, a Roman catholic; at which time, her guardian ſhall put her in poſſeſſion of all my titles to diſpoſe of as her

prudence

prudence ſhall think fit; excepting only, that ſhe ſhall reſerve to herſelf one ſum of twenty-four thouſand pounds ſterling, which ſhe ſhall not diſpoſe of during her life, and which ſhall devolve to her children after her death. In caſe ſhe ſhould die without iſſue, the ſaid ſum ſhall be veſted in the hands of ſix perſons whom ſhe ſhall nominate, to be employed in the foundation of working-ſchools for poor Roman catholics. I permit her to charge my other eſtates with an annuity of five hundred pounds ſterling for her father, and the ſame ſum in favour of her mother; which annuity ſhall be revocable at her pleaſure. I deſire that the ſaid Clariſſa, my niece, may paſs her time, till her marriage, under the eyes of her virtuous mother; but, for eſſential reaſons, I charge, and command, that ſhe ſhall on no account put her foot into her father's houſe while he ſtays in Ireland: if he will come and live at the ſeat where I ſhall finiſh my life, I allow him the uſe of it for the term of his, on condition that he ſhall never bring any perſon into it of the female ſex, born in Ireland; revoking the preſent donation to my niece, if ſhe ſtays four and twenty hours under the roof with a woman of that nation, or in any other dwelling her father ſhall chuſe to inhabit; and in caſe of diſobedience on her part to this expreſs condition, I give all I die poſſeſſed of to the poor.

LETTER VI.

LADY HARRIET TO CLARISSA.

GOD bleſs our good dean, and give him the courage he has need of, in order to moderate the virtues of my dear Clariſſa. It is not the work about which directors are generally employed. Faults are what they have to deſtroy; you have none, and are only to be cautioned againſt the extremity of your virtue. To judge of you by your letter, you would be taken for one of thoſe ſoft ſouls, who do good through weakneſs; and, to deal plainly with you, that is the idea Mr. Balfour had of you: nay, before I could bring him to alter his opinion, I was obliged to cite twenty facts to prove, that the real temper of your mind was courage and reſolution; and, after all, I can ſcarce flatter myſelf with having ſucceeded in his conviction; for theſe men think they degrade themſelves in confeſſing, in the preſence of their meaner moieties, that they have turned to the left in their judgments. I ought, however, to do juſtice to my beſt beloved: either he is leſs tainted than others, with the pride natural to his ſex, or better knows how to diſguiſe it; he hears reaſon, and has not the ridiculous madneſs to believe,

believe, that it cannot come out of a woman's mouth. Do you know that I find myſelf a little diſappointed with him? They would force me to ſubmit to a yoke, in ſpite of my deſire of independance; and not being permitted the pleaſure of freedom, I promiſed myſelf ſome little recompence in putting my huſband out of temper, if I did not find him a complaiſant obſerver of all my capricious humours. I have not been able yet to have this ſatisfaction: indeed, my dear, I believe I love the man, and that love blinds me to all his faults; for, after all, he ought to have ſome tincture of his ſex, and I have not yet been able to diſcover in his character any colour of it. I will ſay more: I abſolutely find myſelf in danger of being overcome by the foible into which I have unwillingly been ſeduced, ever ſince I perceived with what vivacity my huſband intereſts himſelf in your welfare. It is a treaſon againſt my majeſty which I had not foreſeen; and if he continues it, my gratitude will become love. You will perceive that he has rendered himſelf worthy of theſe ſentiments, when you have read his letter, which you are alſo to ſuppoſe ſubſcribed by me, for I actually believe the creature has a ſecret to read my heart, that he may preciſely tell you what I think and what I feel. When you hear his deciſion, then you

alſo hear mine; for which reaſon I here ſtop ſhort, to give you the detail of my adventures, as you deſire.

I have been walked about, dragged, preſented, examined, and, perhaps, criticized by *every body*, that is not *nobody*, in Edinburgh; firſt in the Groſe, at the aſſembly which I told you of, and ſince in every private houſe. I perſuaded myſelf that they would have ſome pity for me at my firſt viſits, and that a card left at every door would do the buſineſs: but by no means; I muſt climb two hundred ſteps, make a thouſand curtſies, and a like number of thoſe compliments that ſignify nothing. Oh! it kills me; and what's ſtill more ſingular than all this, it is on account of conſcience that they make me undergo thoſe trials; that is to ſay, they ſwallow a camel, for fear a nat ſhould imperceptibly ſtick upon it. What good Chriſtians would deny themſelves when they are at home! would it not be a lie? It is impoſſible to perſuade them that a lie implies deceit, and that there is no deception in refuſing to receive a viſit of ceremony. When it is agreed to ſay, my lady is not at home, it is to ſay, in other words, my lady is too polite to give you the trouble of coming up ſtairs. I am ſure you will take the part of thoſe rigorous formaliſts;

maliſts; however, I have this to comfort me, by the time I receive your reaſons, my poor limbs may be pretty well recovered from the horrible fatigue, which, at preſent, will not ſuffer me to hear any thing in juſtification of ſuch falſe females. I ſay falſe, and will not eat my words; for the wretches told above an hundred lies, during the half quarter of an hour I paſſed with every one of them; for what but lies were thoſe overſtrained compliments with which they loaded me? how could they have the face to ſay that they eſteemed me? ſome of them even did not bluſh to go as far as the word friendſhip; did they know me, to love me, to eſteem me! Here then are my ſcrupulous ladies convicted of having ſwallowed the camel, of having told lies. I am curious to ſee in what manner you will undertake their defence. I would believe you ſcarcely dare do it, if I did not know by experience how much you excel in the talent of excuſing your neighbour. Do not aſk me how I like the women of this country, you know I was in a bad humour, and when I am ſo, I never ſee clearly. There is one, however, whom I have diſtinguiſhed; but what is ridiculous enough, I cannot tell who ſhe is. I had not ſufficient retention to remember the name of every face, and it would take me a year complete to

aſſort them properly together; expect to have them deſcribed by the brown, the fair, the tall, the ſhort. You know I have a quick eye at finding out abſurdities, ſomething of that kind will make a ſign-board for every perſon, and your delicacy will not be wounded, as no name will be written under it. Hold, however, there are two ladies I muſt bring you acquainted with; fear not, child; I have nothing to ſay but in their praiſe. One is the dutcheſs of Roxborough: I had often heard of her grace, and, if I may credit the public voice, ſhe would be juſt to your taſte: ſhe is more than the mother of her children, ſhe is their governante, and, when occaſion ſerves, their nurſe, which is as often as they have the ſlighteſt indiſpoſition. Since the death of my lord duke ſhe is become her ſon's ſteward; and I found her at a bureau, where ſhe had twenty letters to read and anſwer. She told me ſhe had that amuſement twice a week; and it is aſſured that, by her prudent management, ſhe has doubled the young duke's fortune. She preſented me to her family, which conſiſts of two ſons and two daughters: I was in rapture: the two young lords are at ſchool, yet take off their hats, and ſalute with a good grace: they never put in their words impertinently, always anſwer with propriety, and, in a word, have the air of children

dren of quality. The two daughters are extremely pretty; the elder aſked me very ſeriouſly if I did not think her ſiſter was prettier than ſhe. You are both extremely handſome, ſaid I, but why do you aſk the queſtion? Becauſe, anſwered ſhe, I would know whether you are of the ſame opinion I am; every body tells me I am handſomer than my ſiſter, and yet I like her face better than my own. Look at her eyes, madam; are they not very fine? And you very modeſt, my dear, ſaid I, embracing her. If this girl does not alter as ſhe grows up, I will ſet her down as one of the few rare things I have ſeen. The ſecond perſon that pleaſes me here, is lady ——. O Lord I forget her name—but I know ſhe is the younger ſiſter of lord Brooke, or Warwick; ſhe is called Charlotte. I can ſay no more of her: this young lady is extremely timid, but ſhe has ſomething in her manners amazingly charming.

Confeſs, my dear Clariſſa, that this is one of the moſt ſingular letters that ever came from my pen: a general criticiſm, long panegyrics: Oh, be aſſured of it, I make prodigious ſtrides towards reformation: we ſhall ſee how ſo good a beginning will proſper.

Let us return to our affairs: I am charmed with the ray of happineſs which breaks upon you; Heaven continue it: but do you enjoy the pleaſure without troubling yourſelf about its duration? It will be permanent, if you follow the counſels of thoſe who love you: place me at their head; you run no riſque of being unjuſt.

LETTER VII.

MR. BALFOUR TO CLARISSA.

I AM much indebted to the dean of Colborne for the good opinion he has of my probity; but I owe him yet more for the honour of a correſpondence, which he has procured me, with a lady of your merit. I could expreſs myſelf in warmer terms, but my dear Harriet ſtops me with a deciſive air. No panegyrics, Mr. Balfour; Clariſſa is not fond of that ſtile. Your way of thinking, madam, I will venture to ſay, is that of all who deſerve a panegyric. I will endeavour, therefore, to accomodate myſelf to it, in order not to diſpleaſe you; but you ought to be obliged to me for the violence I do myſelf, when I am brief on an article, where there is ſo happy an occaſion to be copious. But enough; in obedience to your commands, I will give my ſentiments upon your ſituation.

I know it will be neceſſary, on this occaſion, to manage your delicacy; but my zeal for your intereſt will not permit me to be ſo reſerved as you could wiſh: I am not, madam, one of thoſe, who think the time of miracles paſſed; the arm of God is not ſhortened, he can multi-

tiply them at his pleaſure; and the perfect eſteem, the lively intereſt, which I take in all that concerns you, makes me wiſh that he may deign to work one in your favour: it will be uſeleſs for me to enter into details, which might prove the neceſſity of a miracle, to render a perſon, to whom you are ſtrongly attached, ſuch as he ought to be to make you happy. Permit me only to ſay, that an apparition from the dead would leſs ſurprize me. I cannot, therefore, but greatly applaud the wiſe precautions, which the dean adviſes you to take; and, if mine could add any weight to the counſels of ſo prudent a man, I beſeech you, madam, let what will arrive, take care how you deprive yourſelf of the means of independance. It is not upon a general acquaintance with the character of a certain perſon, that I ground the admonition I take the liberty to give you: it is founded on certitude which can admit of no doubt.

Your charming friend makes me a rival here of every man that ſees her. I am not ſure whether my quality of huſband will excuſe what I am going to ſay, but I know you love her as well as I do, and will be glad to hear that every day adds new beauties, to thoſe ſhe already poſſeſſes. How great would be my happineſs, if I could

hope

hope to join to the gift ſo rare of a wife, juſt ſuch as I could wiſh her; that of a friend, ſo worthy of the ſentiments with which you inſpired me, the very firſt moment I had the honour of being acquainted with you.

Lady HARRIET *in Continuation.*

YOU hear him, my dear Clariſſa; I am the extraordinary woman, the excellent wife; but do not you go to make yourſelf any indirect compliments now, in conſequence of thoſe praiſes, by perſuading yourſelf that my exactitude in practiſing your grave leſſons, has given me a right to them. No, my deareſt, I am more petulant, more teſty, more giddy, more capricious, more whatever you pleaſe, than ever; and, in ſpite of all thoſe accompliſhments, which you dare to call faults, Mr. Balfour, who paſſes for a man of admirable diſcernment, Mr. Balfour, my maſter, my governor, my judge, finds me perfect. I defy you to object any thing to this. Are you confounded? Well, I will take you out of your confuſion. Upon my honour, my huſband is but a mere hypocrite; he is, at this moment, more a man than all mankind put together. It is a mere piece of art, to pique my honour, and engage me to realize what he has the

goodneſs to imagine. I ought to ſay malice: but, after all, the turn is not mal adroit, and I pardon him in favour of the invention.

In ſhort, I muſt ſpeak ſincerely, and tell you, that I am convinced I have not the leaſt likeneſs to the flattering picture, which a too indulgent huſband has given you of his too imperfect wife: but I am content that his love for me ſhould have impoſed upon him; that he ſhould be willing to engage me to become, what he has ſuppoſed I am. Moſt certainly I ought to applaud his motives, and I aſſure you my heart was out of his debt, the inſtant he conferred the obligation: I will even confeſs to you, that this kind of ſentimental payment I think of little value, and that I am determined to omit nothing till I can pay him.—For what, pray? For praiſes given apropos. Heavens! how culpable are men, to endeavour to rule with a rod of iron creatures ſo eaſily governed. I married without love, becauſe my uncle deſired me; becauſe, he being forced to go to the Indies, I had no inclination to follow him, and, in his abſence, I had need of a protector. This good uncle ſwore to me, that Mr. Balfour was one of the honeſteſt men in the world, that he had known him for a long time. For my part, I neither liked nor diſliked him;

him; and, if the ſame teſtimony had been rendered in favour of ſix different men, I would have left the choice to my uncle. Whoever had aſked me, the day of our marriage, Do you love him? I could have anſwered with confidence, No, I ſhall eſteem him. They told me it was neceſſary to reſpect, to obey him. Theſe two duties appeared to me incompatible with love, which is always wounded by an appearance of inequality. I do not know if the ſagacity of Mr. Balfour was ſufficient to give him a pre-knowledge of my diſpoſition; but of this I am ſure, he has conducted himſelf, as if he was from the firſt acquainted with it. He has been able to hide from me the maſter, the chief: I have ſeen nothing in him but the lover: and that ſubmiſſion which I ſhould have diſputed, if he had exacted it, has no difficulty attending it; becauſe it is voluntary. It ſeems to me a preſent which I make him; and, what flatters more than a power to give? it is the nobleſt part we can act, which brings with it a ſatisfaction, and which can receive no augmentation, but from the pleaſure the gift cauſes in thoſe who receive.

Mercy on us, where have I been rambling this half hour? It is her huſband's writing, my Clariſſa will cry out, on reading this page; at leaſt,

it

it is a theme ſhe has copied; her head could never give birth to ſuch a rational diſcourſe. You may think what you pleaſe, miſs; but moſt certainly the words are my own: however, as one ought to be candid with one's friends, I will confeſs that my wit has had no part in this letter: it has been indited ſolely by my heart, and that heart is capable enough of feeling properly, eſpecially when Clariſſa is to be loved and admired.

LET-

LETTER VIII.

CLARISSA TO LADY HARRIET.

MY ſituation, my dear Harriet, is ſuch, that I cannot reaſonably rely upon its duration. Felicity, without a cloud, can never be long the portion of poor mortals; and mine would be perfect, if this reflection did not abate the inclination I have to think it permanent. I put in the rank with thoſe bleſſings, which I have been for ſome time in poſſeſſion of, the change in the humour of my ineſtimable friend; not that it it has ſurpriſed me ſo much as ſhe may imagine; I know her heart, and I know that will ſucceed in ſubduing her ſpirit: but, to tell the truth, I did not believe her converſion ſo near: next to God, you owe the happy turn to your huſband; it is a benefit to merit ten hearts, if you had them, your's is not made to be ungrateful; mine cannot ſuffice for all my ſentiments of gratitude towards the author of my felicity. I believed myſelf completely happy till the day when I loſt my reſpectable aunt: under the ſhadow of her wings, the blaſts of adverſity could not reach me. When I examine my paſt ſituation with my preſent, I find in it a tireſome inſipidity; ſomething was wanting to me, and

it

it was adverſity; a certain piqant; it is, methinks, the ſeaſoning of happineſs; and thoſe who have never ſuffered, cannot, in my opinion, boaſt of having enjoyed. You may, perhaps, find this manner of thinking ſtrange; I experience the truth of it, however; and, if I was not afraid of your being angry with me, I would tell you that I hope you will one day do the ſame. But why philoſophize, you will ſay, upon ſuch a ſubject? One ought to have a vaſt deal of waſte time, to employ it in a manner ſo uſeleſs. I do not know whether your criticiſm would be juſt: we hear all the world complain of the miſeries with which the life of man is, as it were, ſown; but they never reflect that thoſe accidental pains are the ſalt to their pleaſures. You and I have always enjoyed perfect health: we ſcarce are ſenſible of that advantage; while poor James, our gardener, is in tranſports of joy, approaching to madneſs, every time he makes uſe of his limbs, which he was in danger of loſing; he walks with a ſort of raviſhment, merely to convince himſelf that he can walk; he pays a viſit to his crutches ten times a day, and ſtops every body he meets, to ſhew that he can walk without them, and to tell them, what little hopes he once had of ever being able to do ſo. Count, if you can, the pleaſures which this poor man is poſ-

ſeſſed

ſeſſed of; they are all born of his ſufferings and his fears. Let us then no more inſolently accuſe the Divine Wiſdom, who is able to draw good from evil; but abandon ourſelves entirely to his mercy. I reſemble James: that which conſtitutes the exquiſite in the happineſs I at preſent prove, are the little hopes there were of my ever arriving at it. Mr. Balfour tells me, it muſt be brought about by a miracle. Well, God has wrought it, and my deareſt mother ſheds tears of joy, in acknowledgment, every inſtant. It is not the tenderneſs of a daughter that puts a fillet over my eyes; I plainly perceive how far my father has erred; he wanted morals, and nothing could compenſate for that fault; with regard to every thing elſe, no more can be deſired in man: on the ſide of wit and figure—In fine, my dear girl, you will love him, I am ſure; and judge the degree of my affection for him, at a time when he makes his whole ſtudy the happineſs of his wife and me.

Of my mother we may ſay, without exaggeration, ſhe is the phœnix of her ſex. You have ſometimes thought proper to praiſe the diſpoſition of my features; be aſſured, that, in ſpite of the advantages of youth, they will not bear any compariſon with thoſe of my mother. As for her mind,

mind, I am reduced to admire it; all that I could ſay to you about it, would disfigure, without painting it. What virtue muſt her's have been, to ſupport, for twenty years, the contempt of my father? and to whom did he ſacrifice her! I am told that Mrs. Coſby has ſmall pretenſions to beauty, and that her underſtanding is more contemptible than her figure; and this gives me an idea ſufficiently diſtinct of the vice. Good God! how malignant muſt its poiſon be, when it can conduct a reaſonable creature to ſuch depravity.

The dean has triumphed through Mr. Balfour's letter: it would have been unjuſt, if my little judgment had carried it from two perſons ſo much my ſuperior in every thing. However, I have obtained two thouſand pounds, which I deſtine to pay my father's debts contracted in Ireland. This is mere juſtice, my dear; what right ſhould I have to aſſiſt the widow and the orphan, at the expence of a number of merchants and mechanics, who would ſuffer in the very inſtant, perhaps, becauſe they were not paid for their goods, and the prices of their labour?

My father's children are arrived, and ſeem extremely grateful for my kindneſs in putting them

them out; for my father has declared to them, the deſign and expence are entirely my own. I keep the girl near me, till an opportunity offers to ſend her into France; ſome years in a convent are neceſſary for her inſtruction, and to correct ſome faults which ſhe has contracted through a bad education. I at firſt thought of deſiring my mother to take charge of her, but a little reflection made me alter that deſign; her father has always ſpoiled her, and might, perhaps, grow impatient to ſee her contradicted under his eye. The boy goes this day to London: he has a propenſity to trade, and I put him with a merchant, who joins to a great knowledge in that way, a ſolid piety: indeed my poor brother has much need of inſtructions relative to his religious duties; neither he nor his ſiſter know ſo much as their catechiſm.

We live here, pretty nearly, as we did in my aunt's life time; the ſame ſociety: I ſuſpected, it would be too grave for my father. He tells me often that we ſhall be better at my houſe at Old Windſor, which is but two and twenty miles from London. Do you know what has determined my mother to inſinuate to me, that I ſhould pleaſe him much by ſubmitting to him in this matter? It is in the neighbourhood of my lady Roxborough,

Roxborough, and another lady of her friends, who lives at her ſeat with her. Perhaps, when we are ſo near London, we ſhall be obliged to ſpend a month or two there every year. My mother will decide in this matter; with ſuch a guide I am in no danger of going aſtray; and I ſhould be unworthy of the favours which Heaven ſhowers upon me in ſuch abundance, if I aſpired to live in the independance which my aunt would never have deſigned for me, but that ſhe could not foreſee all thoſe happy events.

I beg you will join to my letter to Mr. Balfour a thouſand acknowledgments for the goodneſs he has had in writing to me.

LETTER IX.

LADY HARRIET TO CLARISSA.

GOD bleſs philoſophy and philoſophers, and keep me from having any thing to do with either. The pretty imagination! to regard broken limbs as a piece of good fortune, becauſe that one will afterwards taſte the pleaſure of walking with greater ſatisfaction! Take care, my good young lady, never to wiſh me any ſuch happineſs; its full enough not to drown oneſelf when one paſſes the water: let us enjoy peaceably the pleaſures which we poſſeſs, without impertinently enquiring into the cauſes of them. I am not in the leaſt apprehenſive of that inſipidity which you would make me apprehend from an uninterrupted courſe of happineſs. Thanks to thoſe grains of folly which I have in my compoſition, new deſires ſucceed ſo quickly with me, that I have ſcarcely time for ſatiety. We are all poſſeſſed with a travelling devil, Mr. Balfour excepted, who determines to go to Paris, only becauſe he has important affairs to tranſact there. However, as he continues the politeſt

politeſt of huſbands, he has aſſured me, that if he had ſuſpected my inclination was ſo ſtrongly for that voyage, he would have preferred France to Scotland; and he now terminates an affair in eight days, which he would not have finiſhed in ſix months, but to oblige his Harriet. O! this huſband, child, is not made like others; and if to love one's huſband is a foible, in truth, mine will be pardonable. I do not know why I put it off ſo long, it is not fit that baſhfulneſs ſhould engage me to deceive my Clariſſa, it's all over, and love is come in ſpite of me. I ſwear it is a moſt amuſing thing to love one's huſband; I could not have ſuſpected: it is a certain preventative againſt drowſineſs. Mr. Balfour is forced to dine in town: Harriet, who had a very good appetite, is no longer impatient for dinner. Is ſhe at table? Heaven help the cooks and the footmen; this thing is too ſweet, another too ſalt, the meat is hard, the ſallad too old, the deſert ill choſen; and ſhe calls two or three times for drink. Is there a thundering knock at the door, ſuch as anounces a perſon of conſequence? my lady throws away the napkin, overturns every thing in her paſſage, and makes but three ſtrides acroſs the dining-room, to ſee by the window if it is not her dear, who has found a pretext to quit a place a few minutes

minutes ſooner, where he had good company; but company that tired him, becauſe the object of his affections were not among them. Is it he? the countenance is chearful, the appetite returns, and not a diſh goes away untaſted. Is it a falſe alarm? I return ſadly to my place, call to take away, and my face is as long as my knife; vapours ſucceed, and I am determined to ſcold Mr. Balfour: the reſolution holds two minutes, and then his preſence makes me forget all. I ſhould never finiſh, if I was to deſcribe to you the variety which a little love throws into life. Perhaps it is the novelty of theſe emotions that amuſe me, and a little habitude will blunt the pleaſure. In this caſe, a woman of ſpirit, as I am, will not want reſources. I will beg of Mr. Balfour to make me jealous, and if he has not complacence enough to comply with my requeſt, I will take care to make him ſo. You can eaſily conceive what a fund of variety that will ſupply us with. O! depend upon it, my dear, I will never go to ſleep, for want of ſomething to keep me waking.

As it will be impoſſible for me to receive your anſwer here, I beg the favour of you to addreſs it to ——, where we ſhall embark.

In a word, in ſpite of my folly, I am capable of taſting what is good and eſtimable; I therefore applaud the act of juſtice you have done, in paying your father's debts. It is on thoſe occaſions, my dear, that one feels the pleaſure of being rich.

LET-

LETTER IX.

CLARISSA TO LADY HARRIET.

IT is from London I write to you, my dear: we arrived here two days ago; my houſe at Windſor wanted ſome repairs, and my father choſe that time for a little journey to the capital; I conſented to it more willingly, as, at preſent, there is ſcarcely any one in town; ſo that I ſhall neither be obliged to pay, or receive, viſits. I profit of this occaſion to ſatisfy a wiſh I long have had. I have been in pain for the poor figure my father and mother make; mourning has hitherto been an excuſe for it, but that is almoſt at an end, and I take a true pleaſure in making them taſte the ſweets of that affluence to which they were born, though for a long time they have not enjoyed it. My mother wants every thing, and I do not think leſs than five hundred pounds will make a proper proviſion for cloaths and linen. I have need of your advice upon this occaſion, for I do not pique myſelf much upon being a connoiſſeur in dreſs; but happily my woman has taſte, and underſtands œconomy; it is to her care I leave this commiſſion.

I am called to read a letter, which an expreſs has juſt brought me.—O great and merciful God! My dear Harriet, it informs me of the death of our excellent dean; and what death! and in what circumſtances! But my agitation will not permit me to finiſh this letter. I am obliged to lay down my pen.

I have been in ſuch trouble for theſe two days paſt, that I have not had courage to inform you of the new misfortunes that threaten me, of which the death of my dear friend and protector is a woeful preſage. At preſent I find that a terror which has no fixed object, is a thouſand times more painful than a certain misfortune. You may judge of the ſtate I am in, by the letter I received from farmer Ryding, him whom my aunt aſſociated with the dean in the care of my eſtate.

LETTER X.

MR. RYDING TO MISS CLARISSA.

YOUR attachment to the dean of Colborne, will make you but too ſenſible of his miſfortune: he has been found in his cloſet in an apoplexy; and, notwithſtanding the ſpeedieſt ſuccours were procured and adminiſtered, he died in a few hours, without recovering the uſe of ſpeech, after having teſtified by ſigns his reſignation to the will of the Lord. He appeared to me to be taken up with ſomething which greatly diſquieted him, as he inceſſantly pointed to the bureau, at which he had been writing when his fit ſurpriſed him. I went and ſearched it with the clergyman, who was, at that time, praying by him; and I found there a letter begun, but not finiſhed; which he made ſigns to me to put in my pocket. I mentioned a number of my acquaintances, to know for whom the imperfect ſcroll was deſigned; and when I pronounced your name, he, by a lively motion, gave me to underſtand it was for you: I ſend it to you without looking at the contents. My dear miſs, be not under the leaſt uneaſineſs about your affairs; the

firſt care of the dean, after having quit you, was to put them in order. I have at preſent, in my hands, four thouſand pounds, being your half year's rent, and I wait for your orders how to diſpoſe of it.

The dean's ſervants attribute his accident to the viſit of a ſtranger, with whom he had a long conference the evening before. It appeared to trouble him extremely, and he neither ſupped that night, nor breakfaſted the next morning. You are too good a chriſtian, madam, not to accept this croſs from the hand of God: no doubt our loſs in ſuch a friend is great; but our Heavenly Father knows what is good for us, better than we do ourſelves; and I hope that he will afford you better comfort, than ſuch a poor ignorant as I am can be ſuppoſed capable of.

The Letter begun by the DEAN *of* COLBORNE, *to* MISS CLARISSA.

WHAT pain does it coſt me, my dear child, to trouble, with juſt fears, the ſweet peace of which you believe yourſelf in laſting poſſeſſion. But, my God, how my head ſwims!—

The

The journey to London hides deſigns!—I am not able to hold my pen—Let your mother watch the actions of———

The reſt of this letter, my dear Harriet, is written without any connection, and in characters almoſt illegible. Alas, I doubt it not, his friendſhip for me occaſioned his death; but what could he learn capable of cauſing ſuch a revolution? The conduct of my father, with regard to my mother, is unexceptionable: his friendſhip for me increaſes every day. No matter, I will hurry the workmen, that my houſe may be in a condition to receive us; it is upon the journey to London, that the fears of our worthy friend ſeem founded, and I will leave it as ſoon as poſſible.

I am not ſo occupied with the fear of what may happen to me, but that I have a lively ſenſe of the loſs of him, who has guided my ſteps from my earlieſt infancy; and whoſe ſage advice has given my ſoul a love for virtue. But why wheep for him? Ought I to be more intereſted in my own worldly affairs, than in his eternal happineſs? His days are full, and God has ſpared him the miſeries which he might have

taſted, if—but in vain I endeavour to fix upon an object where my apprehenſions may fall. My mother is under the ſame incertitude, ſhe endeavours indeed to encourage and inſpire me with a tranquility, which, it is viſible, ſhe does not enjoy herſelf.

The circumſtances attending the death of our dear dean, has juſt been repeated to us by the ſervant who attended him the laſt time he was at my houſe. If we may believe this lad, the letter which has diſturbed us ſo much, is nothing but the production of our worthy friend's diſorder: his ſenſes had began to fail the evening before his death, and his ſervant then adviſed him to ſend for a phyſician. He ſays, that the man taken for a ſtranger, was a poor Roman catholic, who uſed to come every year to confeſs to the dean; but, as he already felt his indiſpoſition upon him, he was not then able to hear him, but put him off till the next day. He had been troubled with violent vapours ſince his laſt return home; his mind was on the rack, leſt my father ſhould not perſevere in the road of reformation. It is not then aſtoniſhing, that thoſe ideas ſhould have affected him yet ſtronger, when his reaſon began to give way. My father appears

pears extremely ſhocked at the death of our friend, and has prevented my intentions, in begging me to take his ſervant, who is now our butler. Commonly good maſters make good ſervants; and this, having lived four years with the dean, appears to me to be a man in whom one may confide without any riſque.

LETTER XI.

LADY HARRIET TO CLARISSA.

WOULD you believe it, my dear Clariſſa, for ten days paſt Mr. Balfour has endeavoured to perſuade me, that my incomparable friend is not all perfection! and that one may venture to accuſe her of a little negligence? However, he does not think this, I am ſure, but he has believed it prudent to put ſuch a fancy into my head, in the place of thoſe inquietudes, which your ſilence has cauſed. I was in my poſte-chaiſe when I cried to our landlady, are you ſure no letter has been brought for Lady Harriet Balfour? We have had no letter for any one indeed, madam, ſaid the good woman. Send quickly to the poſt then, cried I; and waiting for the return of a footman, and Mr. Balfour's valet de chambre, who ran with all their ſpeed, I ſat at the door of our lodging, beating the bottom of the chaiſe with my feet, and ſaying every minute, "but ſure this poſt-houſe is a prodigious way off, or thoſe fellows creep like tortoiſes." At laſt they came back, but no letter; and on the inſtant my brain ſet to work, to imagine an accident which might retard your anſwer.

You may believe, my dear, that nothing, poſſible to have happened, eſcaped me. She is

dead—ſick—her father—perhaps her coach has been overturned in the journey ſhe was to make. Thoſe things engaged me ſo deeply, that Mr. Balfour was an hour in the chaiſe with me, before he could obtain a moment's audience. In the end, however, he contrived to bring to my remembrance, that you had told me, you were going to change your place of reſidence; and that very probably you had been ſo taken up in preparatives for it, you deferred writing to me one day, and miſſing a ſingle day, was ſufficient to hinder your letter from coming in time. He carried his complaiſance ſo far, as to ſhew me, upon the book of poſts, the route of the courier; and I really ſee that you had but a few hours to read my letter, and anſwer it. However preſſing our affairs might be, my huſband offered to ſtay at Edinburgh another poſt. Indeed this man is adorable, but I would not abuſe his goodneſs; and I part, my head in a ſack, without ſeeing where you are, and without being able to give the reins to my imagination, as I was accuſtomed to do, on what might happen to you, from one letter to another. If I was great lady enough to keep expreſſes always ready in my ſervice, there ſhould not paſs a day, a ſingle day, which ſhould not bring me news from my Clariſſa, and from me to her; if I

knew were you are this moment, I would ſend off this unfiniſhed ſcroll; but I muſt wait with patience for your letter. I hope to receive it at Calais, and then I will put an end to this. But Mr. Balfour would inſinuate to me, that the poſt-boy, charged with your deſired letter, will not probably have wings; that conſequently he muſt wait the return of the packet-boat, in which we ſhall go over, and ſo it cannot come to my hands before we get to Paris. Indeed, my dear huſband, I cannot wait ſo long; I muſt—O how negligent is my Clariſſa!—This is my eternal burden.

Sure one muſt have a prodigious inclination to converſe with one's friend, when I write to you in my preſent condition. Do but liſten to our tragi-comic entry into Calais. To tell you that in coming into the veſſel, the ſmell of the pitch made me ſick at heart; that, in a moment after, my head began to turn round with the motion of the ſea, and that I ſuffered for five hours, all that one ſuffers from the moſt violent emetick; would only be to give you the hiſtory of all who for the firſt time go to ſea, who rarely fail to pay it that tribute. It is only with misfortunes particular to myſelf, that I would willingly entertain

tain you.—We embarked in the fineſt weather imaginable: to ſpeak poetically, Eolus, who kept the winds ſhut up, had let out a few zephyrs, who, with their breaths, juſt curled the ſurface of the ſea. But all of a ſudden they withdrew, and a dead calm left us immoveable in the middle of our paſſage. Any one leſs impatient than your friend, would have ſtaid with tranquility with the reſt of the paſſengers. Wait but an hour, the wind would riſe with the tide, and we ſhould enter the port. I ſuffered horribly; that hour appeared to me an age; and I very willingly lent an ear to an invitation from the people of a boat, which came by the ſide of our veſſel. Mr. Balfour not having courage to contradict me, conſented to go in with me; and our example, drew after it ſome others. We were three leagues from France, but we had four ſtout oars, and they promiſed to land us in day light; for one of my reaſons for quitting the ſhip, was the fear of paſſing the night in it, or arriving at Calais after the gates were ſhut: in which caſe, they frightened me with the neceſſity I ſhould be under, of lying in a ſuburb hovel, falſely called an inn, the only reſource on ſuch occaſions. We had ſcarcely made half a league, when a terrible black cloud threatened us with a ſhower of rain, which quickly began to pour in

ſuch abundance, that in an inſtant we were wet to the ſkin. However, as the rain had abated the wind, which might have put us in danger, I conſoled myſelf for being wet. But this calm was not long, and the pilot of our ſkiff foretold a hurricane which would ſcarce give time to put us a-ſhore. He hoiſted all his ſails, and, I believe, if he had delayed a quarter of an hour, we ſhould not have eſcaped being wrecked, ſo violent was the tempeſt. You know how I am frightened with thunder; imagine, my dear, that one clap ſcarce waited for another; and what thunder! I never in my life heard any thing ſo terrible. After all, we had at laſt a league to walk over the ſands. I would not ſtir during the ſtorm; beſides, the ſand was ſo ſoft, that I ſunk at every ſtep: if I had been as nimble, and as light as my Clariſſa, our boatmen could have carried me alternately; they offered it, but conſidering my ſize, it was impoſſible to attempt it. I was obſtinate then to ſtay on the ſhore, till a carriage came up; but they made me take notice, that the tide, which began to riſe, brought the ſea under our feet, and that I muſt advance, or be drowned. You may imagine which I choſe. I advanced, ſometimes on foot, ſometimes carried, ſometimes dragged. While I amuſed myſelf with ſcolding, Mr. Balfour took the wiſeſt method,

method, which was, to ſend one of the rowers to bring me the firſt method of conveyance he could lay hold of, chaiſe, horſe, aſs, wheelbarrow, barrow, cart—nothing was excepted. One of our ſervants went with this man, and it was lucky he did ſo, as you will ſee by and by. Though they went as if they had wings to their heels, I had time to walk at leaſt half a league, and to arrive at a ſort of bridge, where the tide could no longer incommode us. Here I was reſolved to fix, till ſome ſort of carriage was procured. When, lo! it appeared, I ſaw a kind of ſedan chair, and, with tranſports, went to fling myſelf into it, one of our ſervants whiſpered ſomething to Mr. Balfour, who begged I would not be ſo precipitate, but that I would, let them get me a barrow. I do not know, my dear, if you have any idea of the vehicles in which they carry dung; the y are laths, joined by four pieces of wood, in the form of a frame; and two ſticks, ſomething like thoſe in our ſedan chairs, but much ſhorter, ſerve to bear them. It was upon this noble carriage that I went the reſt of the road. Mr. Balfour walked before with my two maids, and thoſe unfortunate paſſengers whom I had, by my impatience, engaged in this diſagreeable undertaking. Our ſervants brought up the rear. But what do you think

your

your ſilly friend was doing the reſt of the way? laughing ready to kill herſelf: and I doubt whether your grave ladyſhip would not have done the ſame, had you ſeen our comical equipage. Imagine to yourſelf the women draggled up to the waiſt, dripping water from all ſides, Mr. Balfour's hair as ſtrait as wax candles, all the perriwigs in the ſame condition, and, myſelf eſpecially, wet to the ſkin, and ſhook as no unfortunate being ever was. Happily it was night when we arrived, or we ſhould certainly have raiſed a mob. They had the complaiſance to keep the gates open, ſo we ſlept in town, where they warmed for me a very bad bed; but it was impoſſible to make me ſtay in it a quarter of an hour; I found myſelf quite refreſhed and hearty, and would get up to ſupper. Here is my lamentable hiſtory; and, what makes it ſtill more lamentable, the packet boat arrived in the port as ſoon as we; ſo that, if we had ſtaid in it, we might have avoided all our pains and fatigues. But you muſt know, I was exceſſively inquiſitive why my huſband made choice of ſuch a carrriage for me. He told me the reaſon; the chair they had brought, was that in which they carried the ſick to the hoſpital; and it had ſerved the very ſame day, for a woman in a malignant fever.

Now,

Now do you not think, my dear, that Mr. Balfour had a fine occaſion to regale me with a good ſermon; for it was againſt his will that I drew him into this ill encountered boat? I expected it, and really ſhould have ſubmitted to the humiliation in ſilence, ſo much was I down in the mouth. However, he has been gracious, and I have acknowledged the obligation; nay, I have made a vow implicitly to obey him (during the whole voyage); I have not yet had power to extend it farther: however, the man will certainly ſucceed in rendering me reaſonable, however ſlight the appearance of ſuch a miracle may be at preſent. But, after all, what would he have gained by reproaching me with my imprudence? I felt it as well as him; all his lamentations would not have dried a ſingle drop of the water that had almoſt drowned us; and would have infallibly put me into a fury; for it is inſupportable to hear oneſelf found fault with, when one is in the wrong: for my part, I think it is more eaſy to have patience under an unjuſt accuſation; for then one is conſcious of having the beſt in the diſpute.

Mr. Balfour reſolved to ſtay a day at Calais, to let our people reſt; it is an act of conſideration that pleaſes me, and we ſlept till eleven o'clock

in the morning, without loſing maſs: we went to that, for the officers of the garriſon and your friend ſhed tears of joy there; each part of the ſacrifice was anounced by beat of drum; at the elevation, the ſoldiers preſented their arms, and there was a general ſound of all the muſic. In ſhort, I think with queen Elizabeth: they ſay ſhe loved ceremonies; certainly they are uſeful to beings compoſed of bodies and ſouls; they elevate the ſoul to God, and ſhut the door againſt diſtractions, by filling it with an idea of his majeſty; yet I confeſs I was diſtracted: but how? regretting the misfortune of my poor countrymen, and burning with deſire to ſee them united with us in the ſame faith. But, alas! it is with this ineſtimable gift as with health. I remember you tell me in one of your letters, that a perſon who always enjoys it, does not feel its value: in like manner, the French, who owe their faith to the happineſs of their birth, are ignorant of its worth. For myſelf, I find this moment ſo great a pleaſure in being a catholic, that I firmly reſolve no day of my life ſhall paſs, without thanks being returned to God for ſo great a bleſſing.

We ſet off to-morrow poſt, and, I hope, that the day we have paſſed here, will occaſion your letter to meet me in Paris.

LETTER XII.

LADY HARRIET TO CLARISSA.

MY melancholy bodings are then verified, they foretold me the death of our worthy friend, and the vexatious conſequences of it to my dear Clariſſa. I would willingly believe what the dean's ſervant tells you about his maſter's indiſpoſition; but Mr. Balfour will not give me leave; either he has a wonderful knowledge of your father, or he is furiouſly prejudiced againſt him: he ſuſpects every thing he does, and is greatly concerned that you took that fellow into your ſervice. When I aſked him, why? he anſwered me ſimply, becauſe Mr. Darby recommended it; and he begs of me to inſiſt upon your taking the firſt opportunity to part with him; or, at leaſt, that you will be ſtrictly on your guard while he is in your houſe. He approves much of your retiring to your country-ſeat, and then there are momnets when he believes you would be ſafer in London. In fine, his laſt reſolution is, to diſpatch his affairs as ſoon as poſſible, return to England, and take up his reſidence ſomewhere near you. I cannot tell you how much I am obliged to him, for theſe inſtances of regard for you; but you know

know my heart, and I leave you to gueſs it. He intreats you to let us know exactly every thing that paſſes in your family, and he will conduct himſelf according to your letters. As theſe precautions ſeem to threaten you with ſome approaching danger, he has made me eaſy upon that head. You want three years of one and twenty, and, if you die before that age, your father will loſe all; ſo that, for that time at leaſt, his own intereſt will make him careful of you. However, my dear, be punctual in letting us hear from you: you may imagine what my terrors will be, ſhould one poſt paſs without bringing me a letter. If you have time for no more, write only on a ſcrap of paper, *there is nothing new.*

LET-

LETTER XIII.

CLARISSA TO LADY HARRIET.

ALAS, my dear friend, what fatigues and difficulties have you gone through; I ſhould not know what to ſay to you on the ſubject, if you had not artfully thrown in an eulogy on the diſcretion of Mr. Balfour, without doubt, to engage me to imitate it. Not a word then of your paſt ſufferings; I will content myſelf, with exhorting you, never to violate the vow of obedience which you have made to your huſband. I hope your deference for his advice, will extend farther than your travels: I am ſure his conduct will deſerve, that it ſhould be extended to every thing, even though it was not your duty. But I will not dwell upon this article; my Harriet hates to be preached to by any thing but her own heart; and it ſeems to me to acquit itſelf ſo well, that ſhe may venture to rely upon it.

We are fixed at Old Windſor, but your dutcheſs is yet in Scotland; truly ſhe ſtays too long there for my impatience; I ought to ſay, our impatience, for my mother burns with a deſire to be acquainted with her. We are at more

more than a mile's diſtance from any neighbourhood, yet that does not prevent us from frequent company: the proximity of the town, and Windſor caſtle, brings us ſufficient to ſave us from abſolute ſolitude. My father continues to behave in ſuch a manner, as entirely deſtroys Mr. Balfour's ſuſpicions. I ſcarcely conceive, how a man, accuſtomed to a life of diſſipation, can be reduced to the uniformity in which we paſs our time; it is varied only by hunting parties, which happen but ſeldom, and little tours to Windſor, where he never ſtays above four and twenty hours. He has told us, however, that, was his fortune leſs circumſcribed, he ſhould like, now and then, a ſhort viſit to London. Put yourſelf in my place, my dear Harriet, I have eight thouſand pounds a year, could I hear ſuch an expreſſion drop from the mouth of a father, without immediately telling him, that it was doing me injuſtice, if he did not believe, every thing I poſſeſſed was at his diſpoſal? He anſwered me only, by claſping me in his arms, and I felt my face wet with his tears. In what abundance did mine flow! I never in my life experienced ſuch heart-felt pleaſure. I ſhould conſider myſelf as a monſter, if, liſtening to injurious ſuſpicions, I did not do my utmoſt to re-eſtabliſh the author of my birth in the

the opinion of the man I moſt eſteem. I know, and value Mr. Balfour's motives when he endeavours to inſpire me with a diffidence of my father. A diſſolute youth has but given too good grounds for it; but riper age, great misfortunes, and, above all, grace, which, indeed, I ought to have named firſt; may not all thoſe things create a change in the heart? How can we tell but the prayers of my pious aunt, thoſe of my reſpectable mother, for I count not much upon my own; how can we tell, I ſay, but ſuch prayers may have had efficacy ſufficient to touch the Father of mercies, in favour of my miſguided parent? One may counterfeit for ſome days, ſome weeks; but I have lived in the houſe with my father ſix months, and it is not probable that he ſhould be ſo perfect a maſter of deceit for ſo long a time to eſcape my obſervation. My mother begins to have ſome hopes; and if ſhe blamed the offer which I made my father, it is only, as ſhe tells me, becauſe ſhe is afraid, leſt ill company ſhould overturn the good reſolution he has ſet up. He allows himſelf, that he has ſpent his younger days in a moſt deplorable manner; he repents it, and even confeſſes, that he has had ſome difficulty to conquer bad habits; which confeſſion is, methinks, a proof of his ſincerity. I took the liberty of doing a thing, which

which I did not think myſelf capable of; but it has ſucceeded to my wiſh. After ſpending an hour in imploring the divine aſſiſtance, I followed my father into the garden: (this was the evening of the day in which I offered him the diſpoſal of my eſtate): he turned into a ſhady walk, where he ſat down, ſeemingly ſunk in profound thought, ſo that I was kneeling at his feet before he perceived me; I embraced his knees with tenderneſs; my tears flowed ſo faſt that they took away my power of ſpeaking. O father, my dear father, cried I, forgive your audacious daughter the liberty ſhe is going to take; permit her to open her heart to you; it is charged with a burden that oppreſſes, and will kill her, torn by the oppoſition of contrary duties, equally dear and ſacred. My father took me in his arms, and forced me to riſe. No, ſaid I, my poſture muſt accord with my ſentiments of profound reſpect, in ſome ſort, to expiate the boldneſs of my tongue. Will my father permit me?—All is permitted, dear daughter of my heart, cried he, whom I regard leſs as a child, than as a tender friend; doomed to make the happineſs of my latter days; and in whoſe faithful breaſt I may repoſe the ſecrets of my heart with confidence: fear not to open yours then; for, be aſſured, your happineſs is the firſt object

of

of my wiſhes. Encouraged by this mark of bounty, I dared to tell him, that my reſpect for the memory of my aunt, forced me, in ſpite of myſelf, to a reſerve which was become my torment. Ah! cried I, in a tranſport, which I believe truly painted to him the ſentiments of my ſoul, if the fortune I enjoy was the fruit of my labour and induſtry, with what pleaſure would I come to lay it at your feet; and receive from you, as a favour, whatever might be neceſſary for me: dependance on you would make my happineſs; and I cannot, without confuſion, recall the idea, that, at my age, I am drawn out of the common order, by the will of an aunt, whom I ought to obey, becauſe you tranſmitted to her the authority you had over me. My aunt was virtuous; why has ſhe deprived me of the felicity and merit of obedience, of which ſhe herſelf ſo well knew the value? Permit me to make an end, added I, ſeeing my father ready to interrupt me, in reflecting upon what has paſſed during theſe ſix months, that I have had the happineſs to live under your eye; I believe, I have found an explication of her conduct. Without doubt, my dear father, ſhe knew your heart; ſhe knew that it was capable of the greateſt virtues, and that your errors, pardon me for naming them, were rather the vices of thoſe, with whom certain

tain circumſtances had fatally connected you; ſhe knew how difficult it was to renounce ſuch attachments; that long habitude even rendered them neceſſary; and it was to lay you under the happy neceſſity, of doing yourſelf that violence, ſhe put your intereſt into my hands; it is a depoſit of which I ought to render a juſt account, and this is what cauſes my miſery. If I follow the motions of my affection, which carry me to deliver into your hands, both my perſon and fortune, I no longer accomodate myſelf to the intentions of my benefactreſs, and, by that means, forfeit my right to her favours; they belong to me no more; it is a robbery, becauſe I enjoy them but upon certain conditions, which I violate; and what misfortunes might be the cauſe of my infidelity? How could I anſwer it to my conſcience, if an ill judgihg tenderneſs ſhould again precipitate my father?—I have not courage to go on, but you underſtand me, I am ſure; ſpare your daughter, and put her in a way of accompliſhing her duty.

I did myſelf ſo great a violence by this free explanation, that I had like to faint away; my father raiſed me with great concern and tenderneſs, took out my ſmelling bottle, and refuſed to anſwer me, till he ſaw me entirely recovered; and

ſtill

ſtill demanding his pardon for my boldneſs. You have not offended me, cried, he, my dear daughter; would to Heaven, that I had always been treated with ſuch gentleneſs and good ſenſe; I ſhould not now bluſh before you; nor would you have juſt reaſon to fear following the motions of your tenderneſs in my behalf. People have not known my real character, they believed it might be curbed by outrageous ſeverity: accuſtomed to exceſs of indulgence, from the only relations to whom I owed reſpect, I conſidered the authority which my ſiſter would uſurp over me, as an act of tyranny; her good intentions, (which I knew) were not ſufficient to juſtify the tone in which ſhe made her remonſtrances. I had determined to quit my miſtreſs, the virtue of your mother had engaged me to make that ſacrifice; but the haughtineſs with which your aunt exacted it, bound yet ſtronger thoſe tyes, which I was going to break: I thought it would be ſhameful to give way to her menaces. Here then was the unhappy ſource of all my indiſcretions: my miſtreſs loved expence, ſhe engaged me in it; I firſt was obliged to mortgage my eſtate, and afterwards ſell it. The cruelty of my ſiſter, which left me to ſuffer extremities, ſuch as I cannot recall the memory of without horror; her cruelty, I ſay, at length, threw me into

deſpair: ſhe was very exact in fulfilling thoſe duties, which religion preſcribes; from whence I concluded, that religion was only proper to harden the heart; and this idea confirmed me in a diſregard for religion, which, in my youth, I had too fatally been eſtranged from. My wife became the object of my averſion, becauſe I attributed to her complaints, the haughtineſs and cruelty of my ſiſter. This was the diſpoſition of my mind, till the moment I ſaw you; nay, I was even determined to confound you with the objects of my hate, but my heart refuſed to ſubmit to the odious deſign. I thought I diſcovered in you, ſentiments very different from thoſe, which had produced my diſlike to perſons, who ought to have been dear to me. The good grace with which you left me maſter of all, which had been given you to my prejudice, effaced the impreſſions of diſlike, which one naturally has for thoſe who raviſh from us our fortune. I thought I ſhould always be maſter, while things were left at the diſpoſal of ſuch a daughter. Your conduct has not contradicted the judgment I then made, of your duty and affection for me. You have paid my debts, provided againſt my neceſſities, with a generoſity which I ſhould not have done myſelf. But, my dear child, it is hard, at my age, to live in dependance: 'tis true,

true, mine is ſupportable, while it is only upon you; your reſpect, your tenderneſs, ſoftens and endears it. Yet I cannot be eaſy. You are at an age when one thinks of ſettling, and I cannot ſupport the idea of a ſon-in-law; who knows but your generoſity to me, might be diſagreeable to a huſband, who ſhould think leſs nobly than yourſelf: who knows but you might be forced to abandon the intereſts of a father, or alienate the heart of a huſband? and, in either caſe, ſhould I not regard myſelf as the moſt unfortunate of men? I know that, with the annuity which your aunt has permitted you to give us, we could live in a ſort of eaſe; but I will ſpeak with confidence to my friend; there is a ſuperfluity, which cuſtom has changed into neceſſity, and I feel that I have not courage to renounce it without pain. I hate the country, and ſhall be ſoon eaten up with melancholy, if I find myſelf obliged to continue there always. Some months paſſed at London would make a diverſion which may prolong my life: it is in you, my dear child, to fix its duration, by taking meaſures to put me in a ſtate more agreeable, than that with which I am at preſent threatened.

You ſhall decide yourſelf, ſaid I, on what is neceſſary to your happineſs, reſpectfully kiſſing

his hand, which he had given me: at preſent I have no inclination for marriage; and, if we can anſwer for our own reſolutions, I dare promiſe you, that I ſhall bound my happineſs, to live with you, and my dear mother, at leaſt, for five or ſix years. However, as nothing is more uncertain than the human will, I am ready to enter into any bond you pleaſe, to double your annuity of a thouſand a year before I make any engagement; does that ſum appear ſufficient?

Yes, my dear daughter, cried my father, embracing me, and more ſo, as you have already had the generoſity to eſtabliſh my two children, who are 'tis true your neareſt relations, notwithſtanding the misfortune of their birth. But I doubt whether you can execute what your good heart projects; you cannot diſpoſe of your eſtates, which are ſettled upon your children, or the poor. I do not believe your aunt left much ready money, and you have drained yourſelf to pay my debts; ſo that I ſhould be in a woeful plight indeed was I ſo unfortunate as to loſe you. Be eaſy on that head, ſaid I, I can every year put a conſiderable ſum apart; and, ſuppoſe I die before I have been able to ſave any thing, my jewels will more than anſwer any duties that lie upon me,

independant

independant of thoſe impoſed by nature. The thouſand pounds a year, which you at preſent enjoy, is an allowance I make to the author of my being; that which I ſhall hereafter give you, is a preſent I make to my friend; for you have honoured me with the name of friend; and I hope you will permit me to fulfil thoſe obligations, which friendſhip lays me under. But, dear ſir, ſaid I, ſmiling, (for my father's manner of treating me, had opened my heart, and taken away all diffidence) will you ſometimes allow me the privilege of a friend? I underſtand you, ſaid my father, preſſing me in his arms: you reſerve to yourſelf the right of preaching to me now and then: obſerve me, I am an old ſinner, and may often give occaſion for a ſermon; I will not promiſe you always to profit by it, but I will promiſe you never to be angry.

We continued thus chatting together till it was quite dark; and, in returning to the houſe, I begged my father's leave to rejoice my mother with the recital of our converſation: he pauſed for a moment, and then ſaid, it will be better to ſay nothing to her of it; your mother is ſuſpicious, and ſeeks for a double meaning in a conduct the moſt ſimple: however, I will not prevent any thing that can give you pleaſure, and

therefore leave you to act in this mattter as you pleaſe.

I have been thus circumſtantial, my dear friend, to juſtify what I have done; I am ſure your conduct would have been the ſame, in my ſituation. As a chriſtian, I have no right to judge any man; how then ſhall I dare to ſuſpect my father? Let us ſuppoſe, (which, however, I have no reaſon to think) but let us ſuppoſe, I ſay, that my father would take the advantage of my credulity, to draw from me an allowance, which he does not want, but to abuſe; I ſhall at leaſt have the comfort to think, that I have been deceived by appearances extremely plauſible. I am well convinced, that my aunt was gentleneſs itſelf; and that my father muſt be miſtaken, when he ſays, he was ſhocked with the haughtineſs with which ſhe treated him. But weigh all the circumſtances well; my father had been brought up in abſolute dominion; his will was a law; his very caprices were ſacred; and applauſe followed whatever he ſaid: nay, perhaps, the firſt word of diſapprobation he met with, came from his ſiſter; and, ſuppoſing it was ſoftened ever ſo much, muſt have appeared diſſonant to the ears of a man, who never uſed to be contradicted. What muſt have been the effect of that repre-

henſion

henſion then, ſupppoſing that zeal for his ſafety, or indignation at his conduct, might have thrown into it ever ſo little vivacity! In fine, here is my concluſion: many attempts have been hitherto made, to bring my father back to virtue, by contempt, threats, and hard treatment: friendſhip, gentleneſs, and proſperity, are now to be tried, to ſee whether they will not better anſwer the end propoſed. Granting him to be the worſt of men, I repeat it, I am not authorized the more from that, to deſpair of his converſion, or to ſpare any pains to bring it about. Can I regret any ſums of money employed for ſuch a purpoſe? I, who would gladly give the laſt drop of my blood, to procure him that, which I conſider as the only good; and, in compariſon of which, crowns are leſs than atoms?

Yet it appears as if my mother's hopes were not equally, ſtrong with mine, though ſhe endeavours to diſſemble her doubts: however, ſhe approves my conduct in the affair, and I hope Mr. Balfour will follow her example: at leaſt, if he ſhould find any thing imprudent in it, I entreat the favour of him to keep it to himſelf, as to find fault will be uſeleſs, when the error cannot be retracted; and I am at preſent in a ſituation perfectly peaceful. I have a prodigious

curiosity to know something of the manners of those people, among whom you are going to pass some time: you know I always loved the French; let me know if there is not some exaggeration in the faults attributed to them; and what virtues counterbalance those faults, if they exist. Do not be afraid of prolixity, your memoirs will be the thing most likely to entertain us in our country solitude. As for James, the dean's late servant, be assured, if he stays in my service, he must have a conduct that will bear a strict watch; and I will, in this affair at least, submit myself entirely to the determination of Mr. Balfour.

LET-

LETTER XIV.

LADY HARRIET TO CLARISSA.

MAY Heaven aſſiſt a conduct juſtified, or, at leaſt, excuſed by motives ſo noble, and ſo chriſtian; it is the only anſwer I ſhall make to your laſt letter; and Mr. Balfour hopes, that his ſilence upon the ſubject, will encourage you to continue thoſe informations about yourſelf, which we ſo ſincerely wiſh to be obliged with. This is all he deſires of you; and, as your granting his requeſt is eſſential to my tranquility, I hope you will be exact and ſincere with us.

To tell you that the French ladies wear a maſk, or, in other words, that rouge diſfigures the moſt beautiful faces; to tell you, that the men reſemble butterflies, and that they are more frivolous than our coquettes in England; would only be to ſet down what thouſands have wrote before me. To add, that among thoſe frivolous men and daubed women, one finds knowledge and good ſenſe, which would do honour to our philoſophers, would be to add ſomething to the picture, which is frequently done. To conclude with aſſuring you, that wiſdom and virtue mingle with thoſe contrarieties, that there are

a number of people here, who, through principle, ſubject themſelves to the moſt impertinent ceremonies; would be to tell you, what you will certainly have ſome difficulty to believe: but I will go further, and ſay, that among thoſe butterflies are found perſons of the firſt merit; provided you ſearch for them at certain hours. This has need of explanation.

There are in Paris different ſocieties; in one houſe they play, in another they ſhew their wit; where alſo they criticize the wit of others, without being aſhamed, when their judgments, which is commonly the caſe, are reverſed by the public; here they talk of religion, and charitably condemn all thoſe, who are not of the ſame opinion with themſelves; there they talk leſs of piety, and practice it more. In a word, all the world aſſociate, and generally expoſe themſelves. However, the truly wiſe avoid all this affectation, are chiefly mixed with ſocieties like themſelves, for whom they live three quarters of the day, and abandon the remainder to others, whoſe extravagancies they ſupport with a patience, which they regard as a duty. Theſe are the philoſophers without cloak, ſtaff, or beard. Believe me, my dear, I have found out ſome of them by inſtinct: you

have

have familiarized me with that wiſdom, ſoft and complaiſant, which yields to folly, and rejects nothing but malignity and vice. I would willingly enjoy that ſort of ſpontaneous philoſophy; it warms ſocieties the moſt ſterile, and ſometimes produces a flame ſo bright, that it enlightens thoſe who ſurround it, and brings them to reaſon. Theſe are all the remarks I am capable of making at preſent. I have not been in any public place, and, except a few friends, made in our voyage, have ſeen nobody. An indiſpoſition, which they attribute to the ſtate of woman, confines me at preſent to my chamber: they endeavour to amuſe me by procuring me pamphlets and ſongs; but I have not patience ſufficient to read the firſt, and my morals are too good to ſuffer me to learn the ſecond.

But let us quit the tone of modeſty, and ſpeak naturally: do you know, my dear, that there are authors here, who ſeem to have undertaken to find out to what length the public folly will go? Fairy tales, which have no merit but their obſcenity; ſcandalous anecdotes? Theſe are what fill all the books of the day. Indeed I regard it as a ſort of miracle, if a handſome French woman can keep herſelf prudent. To receive ſuch books from the hand of an agreeable man, who will know you have read them,

when you return them to him; is it not to confeſs to him, that your heart is corrupted? that you dip with pleaſure into dirt and filthineſs? and willingly liſten to thoſe libertine diſcourſes, with which ſuch writings familiarize you? I know, by hearſay, that ſuch kind of books find readers among our country women in England; but thoſe who have a taſte ſo depraved, bluſh at and endeavour to conceal it in privacy. You know, that, with us, a woman who ſhould take the liberty of uſing double entendres in diſcourſe would be regarded as a loſt creature; and that a girl, who ſhould be licentious enough to ſing a looſe ſong, would find it a difficult matter to get a huſband. I ſaid this, the other day, to one of thoſe uncloaked philoſophers, who had heard talk of ſome Engliſh girls, who, notwithſtanding public faults, had afterwards been well married; he found this indulgence very contradictory to that contempt, which we have for women of a free life. But, I hope, I was able to prove to him, that this difference of conduct was by no means incompatable.

A firſt, and only, error in a young perſon, is not always a proof of a vicious heart; very often it is the conſequence of a heart too confiding, becauſe ſhe finds herſelf incapable to deceive:

deceive: it often proceeds from imprudence, in throwing herſelf in the way of dangerous opportunities; and it is not rare to ſee a poor victim of her own credulity, return for ever into the road of virtue, which ſhe confeſſes, with ſorrow, ſhe had formerly made one ſtep from: but a licence in double entendres and looſe ſongs, marks a depraved mind: they are pronounced in cold blood; and it is not poſſible that a female, who has contracted ſuch a habit, can have preſerved even the ſhadow of modeſty. Alas! what is a woman without modeſty? and where is the man ſufficiently hardy, that dares hope to make her recover a quality, which is the greateſt ornament to her ſex? I have heard ſay, that the moſt extravagant rakes, love a ſhew of modeſty, in women that have no virtue. How then can men diſpenſe with it in thoſe, who are deſtined to be the mothers of their children?

Confeſs, my dear, that I have made you read a very fooliſh letter here, with my trite and general remarks. Cannot you gueſs the reaſon of it? do not you ſee that you have put me into fetters? Write me this, do not write me that. Till you ſet me at liberty, you muſt expect nothing from me, but letters as cold as

ice.

ice. I leave you the liberty to do what you pleaſe, provided you do not take from me the liberty of finding ſomething in it to talk upon. This laſt paragraph is one too much, I took the advantage of Mr. Balfour's abſence to write it.

LET-

LETTER XV.

CLARISSA TO LADY HARRIET.

YOU are a ſtrange creature, my dear Harriet; and where have you found, I beſeech you, that I take from you the liberty of ſpeaking freely? I begged quarter from Mr. Balfour, in a ſingle article, becauſe nothing he could have ſaid to me, would have been able to mend it. In every thing elſe, I have followed his counſels; or, rather, I am determined to follow them. Pray do not reſtrain yourſelf, let your pen run when you write to me. All that comes to me from you, will it not be on the principle of friendſhip? and when you think proper to ſcold me, ſhall I not pardon it from ſo beautiful a cauſe? You confeſs to me yourſelf, that Mr. Balfour may have conceived ſome prejudices againſt my father; was it not my duty to endeavour to diſabuſe him? and would you exact of me, after prevention, cruel and barbarous behaviour towards the author of my being?

We have been in an error with regard to my landed eſtates being entailed; the perſon whom I ſet to copy the article out of the will I ſent you, no doubt made a miſtake, and the notary

as

as groſs a one in reading it: they omitted both in one and the other ſome eſſential words, *unleſs ſhe ſhall otherways diſpoſe of them*; ſo that I am miſtreſs to diſpoſe of my eſtates. I ſent the other day for a copy of my aunt's will; and this liberty which is left me, has prevented my ſelling, or pawning my jewels, to make my father the income I promiſed him. I muſt do him the juſtice to ſay, he oppoſed my ſending to London; probably he thought me more attached to thoſe baubles, than, thank Heaven, I am.

Our ſolitude will ſoon be enlivened by the arrival of a young Italian nobleman, at whoſe birth my father, in ſome ſort, aſſiſted, and whoſe godfather he is: the marquis of Montalvo has writ to recommend to him his only ſon, whoſe governor is dead in Flanders; and he charges my father to find him ſuch a one as he has loſt, who, it ſeems, was the phœnix of his kind.

The arrival of our ſtranger, forces me to interrupt my letter; and the orders neceſſary for lodging his retinue have ſo taken me up, that I have been obliged to put it by till this morning. Certainly this Italian muſt have a prodigious fortune, to draw after him ſix perſons;

for he has three footmen, a valet de chambre and an almoner, who replaces the governor. My houſe, which we call, very mal apropos, the caſtle, is exceeding ſmall, and I have found great difficulty to provide for the entertainment of ſo many people. The young marquis is about three and twenty years old; though a certain air of gravity, common to the Italians, gives him the appearance of thirty: his features are regular, his figure charming; in a word, he is the handſomeſt man I ever ſaw in my life. But draw no ſiniſter conſequences from theſe general remarks. A handſome man, a handſome ſtatue, have equal right to pleaſe my eyes; and, till this day, they have made an equal impreſſion upon my heart; however, I will not anſwer that it ſhall be always thus; the day may arrive for touching my heart; and, to ſpare you the pain of raſh judgments and uſeleſs reſearches, I give you my word, to let you into the ſecret, as ſoon as my heart ſhall be ſenſible of the ſlighteſt ſcratch. After this preamble, which I thought neceſſary, I will go on with my remarks on the young marquis. He is aukward, and wears his cloaths with an ill grace; he wears a perriwig at his age, though, I have heard, the young people of his country generally preſerve their hair; perhaps ſome diſorder has

has obliged him to cut it off, for I obſerve he endeavours to impoſe upon the eye by a toupee, which his valet de chambre vainly endeavours to mix with the borrowed hairs; this obſtinate toupee, in ſpite of the pomatum with which it is charged, falls continually on his forehead. And how long, will you ſay, when you ſhall read this, how long has my Clariſſa accuſtomed herſelf to pay ſuch attention to a gentleman's figure, without paying any regard to his wit? I have had an excellent reaſon for it, my dear; for, to tell you the truth, this beautiful idol never ſpeaks, but for compliment; there, indeed, he is prodigal! and puts ſix words were one would ſuffice. They ſay it is timidity, and that he has a great deal of wit. One muſt have a ſtrong faith to believe it; men at his years are not generally ſo fearful; yet it is true, that his eyes are extremely lively.

Since my laſt letter, my father has made a little tour to London, where he ſtayed four days: he is come back more gay, more complaiſant, more amiable than ever. During his abſence our days paſſed like moments. My mother has a fine underſtanding, cultivated with the greateſt care; add to this, an infinite ſweetneſs of temper and ſolid piety! Heavens! how blind muſt a man

man be; to prefer to her a miſtreſs Coſby: that woman, my dear, is in the rank of the moſt indifferent. It is from my father's mouth I write what I now ſet down, and you may judge that I liſten to him with pleaſure: he added, that his children formed the ſole bond that attached him to her, and really they are amiable, and behave extremely well in the houſes I have placed them. I have often endeavoured to engage my mother in a recital of her ſufferings from this creature, but her ſcrupulous charity has not permitted her to ſatisfy me: ſhe prays for her every day, and ſays ſhe is obliged to it, becauſe ſhe owes to the misfortunes Mrs. Coſby brought upon her, her attachment and love to virtue. On this theme ſhe would talk for ever.

I lived, ſaid ſhe, in a great inſenſibility for God, and a monſtrous indifference for my ſalvation; my manners were indeed pure, I was an honeſt pagan, and I aſpired to be no more; they married me young, my heart was void, your father amiable; and it ſeemed natural, that he ſhould pleaſe a young perſon, whoſe fortune he aſſured, for I had but a ſmall portion. Notwithſtanding I conceived an antipathy againſt him, which I could not conquer, I was dragged to the altar like a victim, while my only hope

was

was a ſudden death, which I thought inevitable from the violence offered me. The goodneſs of God, which permitted that I ſhould be unfortunate in this world, only to aſſure my felicity in the next, made uſe of my ſiſter-in-law to open my eyes; ſhe ſhewed me that religion alone could ſoften my afflictions, and lighten the yoke which I imagined inſupportable. Grace, while it aſſiſted me to begin, bleſſed my efforts; and I can aſſure you, that, for twenty years I have ſuffered, but never been unhappy: I have been content with my fate, becauſe God allotted it for me. Nay, if your father could realize your hopes and my deſires, I am almoſt ſure that the mercy of God would find out ſome other means to afflict me; and, without daring to put up ſuch a prayer, I wiſh it from my ſoul. The croſs is the life of a chriſtian, or rather the love of the croſs; for an acquieſcence to bear that which God ſends us, in ſoftening its rigour, makes it diſappear.

Here, ſaid I to my mother, is what I do not comprehend: I know that a chriſtian may be reſigned under affliction; but I have no idea how one can find happineſs in it. It is becauſe your faith is imperfect, my dear Clariſſa; happineſs is in God alone, the croſs approaches us to him, and

and he never gives it to be borne, but through an overflow of his mercy. You will be convinced of this, my dear, added ſhe, tapping me on the ſhoulder; only wait his good time, he will know where to find my Clariſſa, to make her partake the bread of the righteous. We are never nearer pain, than at the moment when our felicity ſeems at the higheſt, and it is a mercy. Reſt ſatisfied with this momentary happineſs, and our deſires after happineſs eternal, that only happineſs deſerving the name, will ſoon become cold and languiſhing.

On reflecting upon this prediction of my mother, I examined carefully all the avenues to my ſoul, to find by what road affliction could reach me; and I find myſelf inacceſſible, except by the route of my heart: firm as a rock every where elſe, the wall on that ſide is a mere cobweb; that is to ſay, my dear, I am able to count the occaſions of misfortune, by the number of objects which at preſent conſtitute my felicity. My Harriet then makes a great ingredient in the phyſic, which God prepares for me. But what is it I have to fear? Is it ſickneſs, misfortune, or death? No, ſurely, that would afflict me, as my mother ſays, without rendering me unhappy. This is an ill finiſhing of my letter; but

but ſuſpend your judgment, I conjure you. The poſt, which is juſt going out, does not permit me to enter into the juſtification of opinions, which appear hard, but are not ſo, ſince they are compatable with this truth, that nothing in the world, without exception, is more dear or more tenderly beloved, than my dear Harriet by her Clariſſa.

LET-

LETTER XVI.

LADY HARRIET TO CLARISSA.

I HAVE much to do with your explications, after the fine compliment with which you finiſh your letter. O what folly to attach ones ſelf to a philoſopher! Theſe ſort of people would perſuade one, that fire does not burn: in ſhort, philoſophy will do what you will. But I am much leſs anxious to examine the reaſon, why fire penetrates me to the bone, as I may ſay; than to get out the redneſs and ſwelling which it leaves upon my ſkin. I have a great deal of reſpect for your mother's virtue, without ever hoping to arrive at it; if Heaven ſends me croſſes, I will endeavour to be reſigned, and comfort myſelf in the hope to ſee a calm ſucceed the ſtorm: but to have joy in them, to deſire afflictions, is only for the ſaints; and I am too ſenſible of my own imperfections to aſpire to that title. Attempt not, out of friendſhip, to pray for afflictions for your poor Harriet; at preſent I ſuffer only a little uneaſineſs, which keeps me to my couch, and my ſpan of patience is almoſt at an end. At laſt it is found out that I am breeding, and, in truth, it is no very amuſing thing. I do not know whether I would not rather ſuffer a fever

of

of fifteen days, than this lameneſs, which never is over. Aye, but the fever will not finiſh in bringing me a ſon, and, perhaps, in ſix months, I ſhall have the ſatisfaction of holding one in my arms. Let us keep the big belly then, and let the fever alone. For the reſt, though I ſay a ſon inſtead of a daughter, it is not that I would prefer one to the other, but merely in condeſcenſion to Mr. Balfour. Your friend is become extremely complaiſant, and her huſband has yet ſomething of the man in him. Theſe animals think that nature makes a miſtake, when ſhe produces any ſpecies but theirs. What vanity! Does not my Clariſſa do more honour to her family, than half a dozen boys? I allow it, ſays Mr. Balfour, who reads this over my ſhoulder; but all women are not Clariſſas and Harriets. You are too gallant, ſir; do not confound theſe two names, if you pleaſe: your wife is modeſt, and has not the pride to want to be compared with the maſter-piece of womankind; that may be ſaid your of daughter, if I bring you one; for I will make her a preſent to my friend, who will communicate to her all her perfections; on condition, however, that ſhe will let her believe that fire burns, water wets, and grief renders miſerable.

You

You may, perhaps, believe, my dear, that your curious friend is ready to hang herſelf, on account of the impoſſibility in which ſhe finds herſelf, to gallop all over Paris. There is not a word of truth in this imagination. Moſt women with child are eat up with the vapours. In England, I am ſure, they muſt be black; the ſubtlety of the air one breathes there ſuffers them not to take that colour. I am only lazy. But what vexes me moſt, my perſon is become ſuch an important concern among them, that they will not riſque it in a journey. I repreſented to them, in vain, thoſe peaſants, who diſcontinue not their moſt laborious work, though they are with child. Thoſe ſoldiers wives, who, if I may uſe the expreſſion, are brought to bed in the middle of the road, wrap their infants in their apron, and run to overtake the waggon. They anſwer me, that, from a habitude of living hard, they are put into a ſtate to ſupport thoſe fatigues. Marry hang thoſe then who brought me up with ſo much delicacy and gave me a body of glaſs. Remember, Clariſſa, you are to give my daughter a body of iron: I will not expoſe her to ſtay nine months in Paris, while ſhe has a friend in England, who, I am ſure, will burn with deſire to ſee, to embrace, to watch, to lead, to quarrel with

her even, if ſhe ſhould give herſelf the airs not to obey her.

Mr. Balfour is acquainted with your marquis, and deſires me to aſſure you, that he is not ſo fooliſh as his air ſpeaks him, unleſs he is prodigiouſly changed within eight years. When my huſband went laſt to Italy, Mr. Darby charged him with a commiſſion from the father of this young lord; he was enchanted with the whole family, and cannot help wiſhing, that you may enter into one which reſembles it. Montalvo is rich, his figure amiable. Mr. Balfour knows nothing of his timidity, he had not that fault at fifteen years old: and do you know the concluſion he draws from it, my dear? that your firſt glance diſcouraged him, that he is in love; and nothing gives ſo aukward an air to a man, who loves for the firſt time. This is Mr. Balfour's firſt concluſion. His ſecond, that you will love him. My dear, his figure pleaſed you, but his underſtanding was ſuſpected; now he is ſure that he has an excellent one, therefore—

His third concluſion, which will pleaſe you as well as the other two, is, that if Mr. Darby encourages this young lord to addreſs you, my huſband abjures all the ſuſpicions which he had conceived,

forgets all his reaſons to continue them; and firmly believes in the reality of your father's converſion. This match, my dear Clariſſa, is ſuitable to you in every reſpect: haggle not then, but marry, if it be only to tranquilize your friends; and put in the firſt article of your contract, after the titles of your huſband, "the ſaid lord alſo conſents, promiſes, and engages to fulfil the oath which he has taken by the beautiful eyes of his wife, to conduct her to Paris, immediately after the celebration of their nuptials; there to regiſter the wry faces of the right honourable and impatient lady Harriet, when ſhe muſt deliver up her preſent depoſit; and afterwards breath upon the new born, as did the fairies of old; wiſhing that it may hold from her mother, nothing but her friendſhip for Clariſſa, who wiſhes to be her godmother, and promiſes to endow her with all her qualities, virtuous perfections, &c. &c. &c."

Sincerity, if you pleaſe; it is a debt which you have indiſcretely enough engaged yourſelf to pay. You have no experience in this reſpect, and you do not know how much it coſts, to ſay, for the firſt time, thoſe big words—I love. Open as you are, if the marquis pleaſes you, you will tell it to him as frankly as you would to me, or any other female companion. In this reſpect you

would never have the wit to coquette, to hide your face with a fan; in a word, to play all thoſe monkey tricks in which the honour of a girl is ſuppoſed to conſiſt; though nobody is made the dupe of it. One would or one would not marry a man; if one would not, it is eaſy to tell him ſo at firſt, without amuſing him; if one would, he ought not to be left in ſuſpenſe to let him think there is ſomething to ſacrifice to him, ſome inclination to be rooted out. Mr. Balfour inſiſts that I ſhould tell you the fine anſwer I made him, when he was preſented to me as a man, who aſpired to the happineſs, or ill luck, of being my huſband: for, indeed, marriage is a lottery, in which there are a great many more blanks than prizes: he pretends, that I anſwered him, "Sir, I have not the honour to know you, therefore I ſhould tell a falſhood, was I to ſay, that I would have for you the eſteem, reſpect and love, which a good wife owes a huſband; however, I will not endeavour to prevent them, if they are willing to come; it is your part to take pains to poſſeſs me with them; and to examine yourſelf well, in order to know, whether you have in you what is able to produce them. I will eſteem you, if you are eſtimable; I will reſpect you, if you are more virtuous than myſelf; I will love you, if you have not more faults

than

than your phyſiognomy announces. The examination I would have you make, with regard to your diſpoſition, is eſſential for me, as well as for you. If my friends have deceived me in your character, you will make me miſerable. We ſhall both play the ſame game, I am inſupportable to all thoſe I do not love; I tell you ſo before hand, therefore take care of it."

I am obliged to depend upon my deareſt, for the truth of this harangue, which I had totally forgot; but I have ſome reaſon to believe it real, becauſe I perfectly remember I had in my head a ſong to the ſame tune. I deſire you will let me know immediately, what you would have ſaid in a like caſe. I conclude, from my forgetfulneſs, that I was leſs myſelf, in that moment, than I believed; but you know I trouble myſelf leſs than a certain perſon, becauſe I do not reflect ſo much; ſhe would then be more troubled than I, upon ſuch an occaſion, and I ſhould be ſorry to loſe her harangue.

LETTER XVII.

CLARISSA TO LADY HARRIET.

IF your uncle was to read your letters, he would have a very good opportunity to employ his old adage, *The fox muſt die in his ſkin.* Do not take this for a reproach, my dear; change as much as you will, upon certain articles, but preſerve ſtill your heart, and your amiable gaiety. This then is your tone, when you are ſick, and have the vapours; your peeviſhneſs reſembles the joy of others, like two drops of water. I muſt tell you, however, that I do not like your indolence; it is a ſtate againſt nature; ſhake yourſelf, if the phyſicians will give you leave; but at preſent you are under their rod, and they ought to make you do penance for your hereſies againſt phyſic. I ſhould be very ſorry that you were to have a daughter, inheriting nothing of her mother, but her friendſhip for me; ſhe might love me, but I ſhould hardly love her: I muſt have a copy, abſolutely like the original; in which caſe, there would be no occaſion for fairies; I very well perceive, that I am not one, eſpecially when I write to you; for, was I in poſſeſſion of a magic wand, ſtead of a pen, you ſhould have a viſit, inſtead of a letter.

Why

Why do you ſpeak of regiſtering grimaces? you miſtake the word, you ſhould ſay jeſts; for I am ſure you would draw ſtrokes of pleaſantry from your pains, as well as from every thing elſe. It is becauſe marriage is a lottery, where there are but few prizes, that I am reſolved, to think, at leaſt, four times before I take a ticket: I do not love games of chance; but rather thoſe, where caution and good play may aſſiſt fortune. This is nearly the anſwer I made, about two days ago, to my father, who ſolicited me in favour of his godſon: it is to tell you, in other words, Mr. Balfour had nearly gueſſed right: I ſay nearly, for the romance is not perfect; ſince, in thoſe ſort of works, love is almoſt always a ſurpriſe. Now, the marquis came here, expreſsly to be in love; his father charged him not to fail, and I was the governor which he defired my father to procure for him.

But a truce to raillery, I promiſed you to be ſincere, and I will keep my word. The embarraſsment which the marquis ſeemed at firſt under, has been, for ſome time, worn off; and I am as well content with his underſtanding, as his perſon: but this is not the eſſential point; his heart muſt accord with the reſt, and it is eaſy to maſk it: I require more, religion; a

piety, ſolid, and not ſuperſtitious: qualities very rare in an Italian. If, after a ſtrict examination, I can reaſonably preſume, that he unites theſe qualities, I will marry him, in preference to any other man. I do not conſider exterior and brilliant qualities as abſolutely neceſſary to the happineſs of a wife; but when they are found united with the more ſolid ones, it is a ſuperfluity that hurts nothing. That is not my queſtion, cries Harriet, with vivacity; one ſingle word, and that will be deciſive. Do you love him? To anſwer you, I muſt have more experience than I poſſeſs; but I will deſcribe my ſituation, and beg of you to decide yourſelf. I ſee the marquis with pleaſure, quit him without pain; I am never tired of his company, but I never find myſelf uneaſy when he is abſent; I ſleep my ſeven hours, without interruption, and he never mixes himſelf with my dreams; he cauſes no diſtraction in my prayers, nor even in my ſtudies; I ſhould be truly ſorry if any unlucky accident was to befall him; I could ſee him pay his addreſſes to another, without inquietude. I will obey my parents, without repugnance, if they order me to marry him; I will obey them without vexation, if they forbid me ever to think of him. Is this love, Harriet? No, anſwers ſhe, ſpitefully; but you deceive

us,

us, or you deceive yourſelf. Myſelf I may; but, moſt aſſuredly, I do not deceive you: the end will juſtify me, if my proteſtations are not ſufficient. My father will needs ſhew London to our gueſt; it is a very unfavourable ſeaſon, nobody being in town: however, he goes to ſee the public edifices; for which, two or three days will be ſufficient; and my father was obliged to promiſe the marquis, he ſhould not be longer. They made me ſome propoſals to go with them, but I would not liſten. Is this love? I go to profit of the ſolitude, which their departure affords me, to demand of God the grace to conduct me in this affair, in ſuch a manner, as will be moſt conducive to his glory, and my ſalvation. Methinks, I have only theſe two motives; and I aſſure you that I ſhall pray for the concluſion, or rupture of the affair, with ſuch indifference, that its breaking off will not coſt me a ſigh. Montalvo, notwithſtanding, is not indifferent to me; I feel ſomething for him which I cannot explain: I wiſh him happineſs, I think he deſerves it; but I could, without repugnance, ſee him happy with another. Theſe are my laſt words; and I repeat it again, I do not deceive you.

LETTER XVIII.

LADY HARRIET TO CLARISSA.

BE not frightened at the ſight of this packet, my dear Clariſſa. Will you have the courage to read this letter, or rather this volume? I accuſe myſelf of indiſcretion for ſending it to you, and yet I will put it in the poſt. It is my way, you know, to be ſenſible of the follies I am going to commit, and go through with them? What hopes can I have that you will read my epiſtle, when, perhaps, you are buſy in diſcuſſing a point, the moſt ſerious of your life? No matter; what is written, is written; and, what's worſe, ſhall go. What I have to ſay, is too ſingular to be kept in ſilence. You remember, my dear, without doubt, that I had a taſte for romance, which you took a good deal of pains to triumph over. I have broken the promiſe I made you, never to read any more; and it is your own fault; you recommended me to ſubmit to the rod of the phyſicians; and the reading of thoſe trifles, has been recommended to me by the ſons of Hypocrates: add to their authority, that of my language maſter, who aſſures me, there is no better way to perfect myſelf in French;

French; and you will find me ſufficiently juſtified in my breach of faith. I had ſenſe enough to truſt Mr. Balfour to chuſe me a novel, for I had not been able to read ten pages of the licentious pamphlets, which had been ſo much praiſed to me. He came back, three days ago, with five volumes, which he put upon my table; and, at the ſame time, he fixed his eyes upon me ſmiling. I thought the ſmile was occaſioned by the work which he offered me. I opened a volume; but judge of my ſurpriſe when I read the title, *Letters from Clariſſa*. If there had not been five volumes, I ſhould have imagined they had taken the pains to print your letters, but you have not yet fulfilled ſuch a laborious taſk. I ran over! I devoured! My aſtoniſhment grew at every line! A Clariſſa, whom, at firſt, you reſembled feature for feature: I ſay at firſt, for the reſemblance is not ſupported; and ſhe commits follies of which you are incapable: a miſs How, as giddy as your Harriet, and almoſt as much attached to her Clariſſa, as I am to mine. All of a ſudden I am taken with a fancy, to make an extract of theſe books for you, which, moſt aſſuredly, you would not have patience to read. It is, however, ſown with admirable maxims. The author is Engliſh, a man of worth, and loves virtue; but he is

prolix to a dreadful degree; and this fault is your averſion. To have a fancy, and ſatisfy it, you know, are two things, which follow immediately; and it is to this bad habit, which, I confeſs to you, as though you were ignorant of it, that you owe the drudgery I at preſent impoſe upon you. I muſt alſo have your opinion of my criticiſm upon the work. Clariſſa, all beautiful, and all perfect, is younger ſiſter to a brother and ſiſter, who reſemble her in nothing. Roughneſs, impertinence, obſtinacy, is the character of the brother: folly, jealouſy, a deſire to revenge herſelf on her ſiſter who eclipſes her, is the character of the ſiſter. Mr. Harlowe, the father, is deſcribed as an honeſt man, cruel towards his wife, who is ſaid to be perfect; deſpotic over his family, and, notwithſtanding, governed by his ſon. Two uncles, who have the character of the father; an aunt, who reſembles the mother, whoſe ſiſter ſhe is; Lovelace, who addreſſes the eldeſt of the miſs Harlowe's by miſtake; but, having found his error, makes her refuſe him, and demands Clariſſa, the younger, with whom he is in love. This Lovelace is one of thoſe characters, which cannot be defined; in the firſt volumes, through the moſt frightful libertiniſm, one diſcovers ſome rays of goodneſs, which cannot accord with what paſſes at the end

of

of the work. The elder brother engages the father in an averſion he had conceived againſt Lovelace, ſince they were at the univerſity; and the family decide, to get rid of him, by treating him with rudeneſs. He ſubmits to it, however, in conſideration of Clariſſa. But, at length, they puſh things to extremity: Harlowe, the ſon, forces him to fight; is vanquiſhed, receives his life from the conqueror, and only becomes more enraged againſt him. Clariſſa informs miſs Howe of all theſe accidents. This original, of which I am, in ſome ſort, the copy, would make Clariſſa confeſs, that ſhe loves Lovelace. Clariſſa anſwers her, pretty nearly, as you have done me. Obſerve, Clariſſa's grandfather had left her a conſiderable eſtate, where ſhe might live independant; ſhe gives it up, to be diſpoſed of by her father, and her friends quarrel with her for doing ſo. I would do as much; but here is what I would not do. During the greateſt embarraſsments of her friend, miſs Howe fills her letters with ill-placed jeſts, at the expence of her mother, and one Hinckſman, her lover: ſhe falls again upon the Harlowes, whom ſhe turns into ridicule (with all my heart) and finiſhes by a picture of poor Hinckſman, whom ſhe is reſolved to burleſque at any rate.

The younger Harlowe propoſes one Somes for a huſband for his ſiſter Clariſſa; he is extremely rich, nephew of an uncle, who got wealth by baſe means; and would have been the moſt avaricious of all men, if his nephew had not been more ſo. Somes is a ſoul of dirt, who conſents to buy Clariſſa: all the family, even her mother, enter into the conſpiracy. It is true, ſhe does it againſt her will; ſhe ſacrifices every thing to a love of peace, which ſhe cannot obtain: from whence, miſs Howe concludes, that a wife, who is too ſubmiſſive to an unreaſonable huſband, aggravates his faults, and puts it in his power to abuſe her good nature. This remark is ſufficiently to my taſte, but I doubt whether it is to your's: what ſay you?

Before the entire rupture with Lovelace, they had ordered Clariſſa to write to him; I do not know why: however, ſhe continues the correſpondence, in order to prevent her furious lover from taking vengeance on her family. Lovelace, piqued at their ill behaviour, undertakes to make himſelf maſter of Clariſſa in ſpite of them; for which purpoſe, he excites them to drive the girl to extremeties, and even to uſe violence, in order to force her to marry the monſter, to whom they would ſacrifice her. The Harlowes fall into the

the ſnare; Clariſſa engages never to marry, if they will, neither Lovelace, nor any other perſon; to give up an eſtate; to depend upon the liberality of a father: but all is refuſed, rejected, and her mother has the barbarity to preſs her to marry Somes, though, at the ſame time, Clariſſa tells her, that both her preſent and eternal happineſs, depend upon her refuſal. Where now, I beſeech you, are the praiſes which were beſtowed upon this virtuous lady? was ſhe to be criminal, in order to pleaſe her huſband? and is it not a crime to uſe violence to a daughter, who made propoſals ſo reaſonable? Has the author a mind to ſhew us the danger of an exceſſive ſoft and ſubmiſſive temper? I believe he might ſpare himſelf the trouble; theſe are not commonly the faults of women, and if there are, here and there, ſome to be found ſubject to them, I apprehend it is an imperfection which will not ſpread very far. Lovelace's promiſe to Clariſſa, that he will not exterminate all her relations, draws a promiſe from her, to continue unmarried, if ſhe cannot marry him. Afterwards he adviſes her, to throw herſelf into the hands of lady Lawrence, his aunt: ſhe conſents; changes her mind, and gives her word again, in the fear that they ſhould take the advantage of a fit to marry her; for ſhe knows that they have brought a miniſter into the houſe,

houſe, little enough ſcrupulous to aſſiſt in ſuch an action. However, ſhe contradicts herſelf again; and writes to Mr. Lovelace, that ſhe has changed her mind. As he doubts it, he leaves the letter in the place, where they were uſually depoſited; which forces Clariſſa to come to a rendezvous ſhe had given him, in order to tell him poſitively that ſhe could not quit her father's houſe. While ſhe is talking with him, ſhe hears a cry, and claſhing of ſwords; believes that her relations are come to ſurprize her; fears they will cut one another's throats before her eyes, and ſuffers herſelf to be dragged by Lovelace to a coach, which waits for her. She is conducted to a farm-houſe; and Lovelace, whoſe firſt deſign was, at leaſt, to prove her virtue, forgets his perverſe reſolutions, on ſeeing her, and offers to marry her directly. She rejects this propoſal with diſdain; declares that ſhe will, if poſſible, be reconciled to her family, and continue unmarried if that depends upon her. It is in conſequence of theſe reſolutions, that ſhe refuſes to go to Lovelace's relations; deſires that he will conduct her to London, and leave her in a houſe which he ſhall not approach. Here miſs Howe ſeems to act the part of a perſon of ſenſe, and writes to her friend, that ſhe has no choice left, but to marry Lovelace; that ſhe will be unfortunate

tunate indeed, if ſhe is not able to reform his manners; but that ſhe has put herſelf under the neceſſity of becoming ſo, becauſe it is better to be unfortunate than diſhonoured.

Here is the great fault of this romance; it is certain that a girl, who has been forced to quit the houſe of her father, ought to go off with a huſband only; we are accountable to God for our virtue, and to men for our reputation: the more the manners of Lovelace are known to be depraved, the leſs reaſon ſhe had to hope, that the world would imagine, he had reſpected a girl, whom he loved, and had in his power; the hope to reconcile herſelf to her parents was ridiculous, they could no longer regard her, but as a daughter, whoſe honour was loſt. For me, was I in the caſe, to run away with a footman, I would rather be accuſed of meanneſs in marrying, than of vice in ſtaying with him; and if he could not immediately place me among people of honour, who might anſwer for my conduct, he ſhould be my huſband in four and twenty hours. I find nothing which is not preferable to the loſs of reputation, except the crime that may occaſion it. Now there is no crime in a baſe alliance, and ſtill leſs in ſuch a one as Clariſſa might have made. Her friend repeats

it

it to her in every letter; she allows that her friend is in the right; Lovelace offers his hand twenty times; but, because he is not pressing enough, she repulses him, and, through want of complaisance, throws him back into his natural state of perverseness.

He conducts her to London, to a bad house, the mistress of which pretends to be a woman of fashion; and, to make a long story short, he makes use of a potion, which deprives Clarissa of her senses. After this, she gets away from him, and constantly refuses the hand of Lovelace, though she is supplicated to accept it by all the family of that monster; and, at length, she dies, after receiving several affronts, which are but episodes to the subject. Why, since they make use of the name of a girl, so perfect as my Clarissa, do they not also give her a conduct as perfect? What need had she of Lovelace to save her? Either she could have obeyed her parents, or her conscience opposed. In the second place, she should have swore the peace against her persecutors; protested before a magistrate that she would not marry Somes; that all marriages made otherwise than in the church, and publicly, would be forced on her side; make the magistrate the depositof the promise to continue a maiden;

and,

and, thus ſheltered from the violence ſhe feared, returned to her father's houſe, and ſubmitted to perſecution with a good grace. It is true, that Lovelace had ſurrounded her with ſpies, and that ſhe might have fallen into his hands; but then ſhe would have been in the caſe of a girl run away with, who, after that, has no party to take but marrying her raviſher.

Here are my reflections, my dear; and, I flatter myſelf, they will be yours; if ſo, have the goodneſs to confirm it to me. I know myſelf, all the good I have in me comes from you; and I am diffident of opinions which apppear moſt juſt to me, till you have put your ſeal upon them. However, let me tell you, that Mr. Balfour is of my ſide of the queſtion, and cites an epiſode of a celebrated author, who thought the ſame way. Count Roger was on the eve of eſpouſing a lady he loved, and who loved him; ſhe was named Alice. The father of Alice dies, and makes his daughter promiſe to conclude her marriage; but her mother oppoſed it, becauſe ſhe loved Roger; and, to aſſure him to herſelf, ſhe makes the count de Martin carry off her daughter. Alice, in ſpite of her love for Roger, marries the raviſher, and believes that honour requires ſhe ſhould do ſo; while the deſpairing

and

and afflicted Roger approves the conduct by which he loſes her.

And we alſo approve of your conduct, with regard to the marquis de Montalvo; we paſſionately deſire, however, to ſee you married, without being able to tell you half the reaſons we have to wiſh it. Conſult God, nothing is more juſt; but reſign yourſelf to the commands he ſhall manifeſt, by a hidden providence, under the appearance of events ſeemingly fortuitous; he could not ſend you an angel from Heaven, to declare his will to you in a manner more immediate.

LETTER XIX.

CLARISSA TO LADY HARRIET.

YOU will never imagine, my dear, that your friend has fallen under a temptation to read the romance you mention, and in eight volumes; for the Engliſh author has been abridged by his tranſlator into French, whom you have ſtill found too long. I believe, the intention of the author, which is extremely good, has eſcaped you. It is as much as to ſay, even a girl as virtuous and perfect as my Harriet, has loſt, through diſobedience to her parents, her happineſs, her reputation, and her honour. Learn, young women, by her example, that the firſt fault againſt the ſubmiſſion which you owe your parents, may conduct you from precipice to precipice; that there are proceedings which leave nothing but a choice between two misfortunes; to be in league with an immoral man, is, no doubt, a great one; but it is not without reſource; there is a hope to reform, or by patience to ſanctify ones ſelf; but reputation once loſt, is never to be regained. You ſay, that if you found yourſelf under the neceſſity to fly with a footman, you would marry him directly. The caſe is very delicate; one muſt

muſt ſuppoſe an abſolute impoſſibility to find protection, or reſource. One muſt—O, one muſt not expoſe ones ſelf to the neceſſity; and I ſhall always have a bad opinion of a girl, who quits the houſe of her father, unleſs ſhe does it to avoid the commiſſion of a crime; and how can ſhe find herſelf in that circumſtance? I think a poor girl much to be pitied in a parallel caſe, if it be poſſible: there are few fathers who would ſeek the ruin of their children. I conceive, however—but away with thoſe ideas, we ſhall hever have need of them; and they are things which leave traces in the imagination, that produce nothing either good or uſeful.

After having reflected upon the match propoſed to me, I found no objection, ſufficiently valid, againſt it; I gave my conſent with a good grace, to prevent the marquis from ſuſpecting, that I did myſelf any violence, as you ſay in one of your letters. I ratified it again with greater joy, when they were going to prepare the articles: the marquis de Montalvo, an only ſon, could well diſpenſe with a fortune with a wife: his father, of whom I have conceived the higheſt idea, orders him, in a letter which accompanies his conſent, to content himſelf with a quarter of my fortune, and give up the reſt to my parents:

they

they will have no child but you, ſaid he, and it is not juſt that they ſhould have but a bare ſubſiſtence, while you enjoy abundance. The joy with which the marquis ſubſcribed to this article, tranſported me to ſuch a degree, that I could very willingly have embraced him; and, at leaſt, I gave him the liberty to read in my eyes how much my friendſhip for him was increaſed. I ſay my friendſhip, Harriet; for aſſuredly I have no more: the more I examine myſelf, the more I am perſuaded of it; and I have not concealed it from the marquis: he would have ſomething of a warmer kind, but it is not in my power to give it. Perhaps I am not of a conſtitution for any thing but friendſhip. Here are the articles which we have agreed upon, and we are to ſign the day after my marriage; for by marrying only I acquire a right to diſpoſe of my eſtate. My portion will amount to fifty thouſand pounds ſterling; part in the bank of Genoa; the reſt, in India bonds, the funds and the bank, ſhall be diſpoſed of, in paying the legacies my aunt left behind her; that is to ſay, thoſe which conſiſt in life annuities, and part to purchaſe an eſtate, which ſhall deſcend to my heirs; but my father and mother ſhall enjoy it for their lives. As my mother's inclinations agree entirely with mine, we will engage my father to

buy

buy this eſtate in Italy, that we may have the pleaſure of ſeeing one another: but, notwithſtanding, every two years, we are to paſs ſome months in England, to pay a viſit to my Harriet, and her huſband, on condition that they will, in their turns, pay us a viſit in Italy. There will not be time to have your anſwer to this, before the celebration of my marriage; but there will be time enough for you to receive this, and pray for me. I am ſenſible how many virtues are neceſſary to enable a woman to fulfil the duties of a wife; and this frightens me. You ſee, Harriet, that your incenſe has not intoxicated me. I have ſaid nothing to you hitherto of the exceſſive flattery with which you fill your letters: I know you too well, to hope to make you change your tone; but theſe praiſes will be no longer in ſeaſon. If my huſband inſiſts upon my ſhewing him the letters I write and receive, which would be nothing extraordinary from an Italian; if, I ſay, he will ſee your letters, he may ſuſpect me for taking pleaſure in a language which reſembles adulation, but is, in fact, nothing but the effect of the friendſhip, a little blind, that you have for me. This may diminiſh the eſteem with which I would wiſh to inſpire him, and would flatter me more than thoſe tender ſentiments, which generally diſappear after marriage.

LET-

LETTER XX.

CLARISSA TO LADY HARRIET.

WITH what a horrid tale am I going to wound your heart, my dear and tender friend! How will Mr. Balfour be ſhocked, who yet appears to have foreſeen it? Ought I not to reproach myſelf for my obſtinacy, in perſiſting in that fatal confidence which has undone me, when ſuch a man as he, had pointed out the precipice to which it conducted me. Yet was it not ſhocking alſo to ſuſpect a father of ſuch villainy? Ah, dear Harriet, when I writ to you in ſuch ſecurity, that I ſhould never be in the ſituation imagined, by the author of the romance of Clariſſa; how far was I from thinking, that I was arrived at the moment, when I muſt experience misfortunes a thouſand times more terrible; at the moment, when I ſhould be obliged to quit my houſe, like a fugitive, to ſeek near you an aſylum againſt the perſon who ought to be my protector? But, alas! even that reſource is raviſhed from me; and your poor Clariſſa—but what ſhall I ſay—It is from the obſcure chamber of a perſon unknown, to whoſe probity ſhe is obliged to abandon herſelf; that ſhe implores the pity of you and Mr. Balfour. But I keep you

too long in ſuſpenſe; let me take up the thread of my unfortunate ſtory, from the concluſion of my laſt letter.

The ſword hung over me by a thread, and I was at eaſe; I waited, without the leaſt inquietude, in regard to my fate, for the moment which was to unite me for ever, to a man, whom I thought worthy of all my eſteem. Who would not have been deceived? The monſter affected virtue, religion, with an hypocriſy, to impoſe even upon a perſon, whom long experience might have rendered more ſuſpicious; and then the teſtimony which Mr. Balfour gave in favour of the Montalvo; was it not ſufficient to prevent any doubt from ariſing in my mind? You know, that ſince the act of parliament, nobody is permitted to marry without a licence, nor any where but in their proper pariſh, which is an extreme inconvenience to Roman catholics: ſome, after having been married by a prieſt, have gone through the proteſtant ceremony: others have gone into France, or other catholic countries, to be married, and avoided, by that means, an appearance before the miniſter. They inſinuated, that this ceremony was not neceſſary with regard to me, as I was going to quit the kingdom; and that it was ſufficient, if I was married

married by the chaplain of an ambaſſador, or envoy of ſome Italian prince. Montalvo knew the chaplain of the grand duke of Tuſcany; he undertook to write to him, and he came on the day appointed. At firſt he made a good deal of difficulty to marry us; he expoſed himſelf to be tranſported for fourteen years, and it was natural that he ſhould take every precaution to avoid ſuch a misfortune. My father, however, eaſed his ſcruples, by diſcovering to him a circumſtance, which I forgot to tell you before. The treaty between the young marquis and me, was unknown to any body out of our houſe; the domeſtics even were ignorant that the celebration of our nuptials was ſo nigh, and it was an eaſy matter to ſend them out of the way. In conſequence of this, two were ſent to London, and two to Windſor, under a pretence of carrying letters of conſequence, and buying proviſions. My women went to bed be-times, as, you may remember, I never had the cruelty to make them wait for me, when I ſtayed up beyond a reaſonable hour; rather chuſing to undreſs myſelf. We would only have kept up the houſe chaplain, and Montalvo's, who, with my father and mother, made four witneſſes; but one of theſe failed us: my chaplain was taken ill after dinnner, and forced to go to bed; but he aſſured me, that the

three remaining witneſſes were ſufficient. My mother thought herſelf at the happieſt period of her life; ſhe dreſſed me with her own hands, and, in ſpite of my little regard for magnificence, I was obliged to obey. A deſcription of my dreſs is neceſſary, becauſe it produced an incident which ſaved me, as you will preſently hear. I had a robe, with a rough ground of ſilver, wrought in poliſhed ſilver, powdered with tuffts of roſes, very elegant: my black hair was braided with pearl, you know my aunt had a great many of the moſt beautiful; as my diamonds were not ſet, I wore a collar and earrings of amithyſts; and my dear mother made a ſprig of the largeſt diamonds, to place at one ſide of my head; ſo that my jewels alone were worth at leaſt ſeven thouſand pounds ſterling. Poor victim! How did Montalvo devour with his eyes thoſe riches, which he thought himſelf already in poſſeſſion of. You know, my dear, that I was always much attached to Fanny, my waiting-maid, and her attachment to me merits that I ſhould; I could not make a ſecret to her of my marriage, and I riſqued nothing by diſcovering it, as ſhe was to go with me into Italy. The poor girl told me, that ſhe ſhould not be eaſy, unleſs ſhe had the pleaſure of ſeeing me in my wedding cloaths, and I promiſed to ſlip into her

her chamber, a moment before we ſat down to table. They waited for ſupper till all the ſervants of the houſe were retired: you know there were but few remaining: thoſe of the marquis prepared our ſupper in the village, and it was ſerved at eleven o'clock at night. While they were occupied in ſettling every thing, I pretended to have forgot ſomething in my chamber, and ran up, in order to keep my word with Fanny. I was ſurprized to find her out of bed, ſeemingly in great conſternation. An unknown perſon, ſaid ſhe, has given me a letter, and he ſaid, that it was of great importance to you to read it before you was married. I was ſurprized, that a ſtranger ſhould be ſo well acquainted with a thing, that was a myſtery to us all; and would feign have queſtioned him a little; but he would not ſtay; only recommended ſecrecy to me, and diſpatch in delivering it to you. I have had it in my pocket theſe three hours, not knowing how to get at you; but if you had not come up now, I was going to raiſe a cry, under pretence of a fit of the cholic. I took the letter, trembling; and not being willing, contain what it would, that they ſhould ſuſpect the girl had given it to me, I went down into the ſtudy; but judge what I became, as ſoon as I read the original of the copy which I here ſend you.

MRS. COSBY TO MISS CLARISSA.

MADAM,

IT is upon my knees I write to you the horrible confeſſion of my crimes. Grant, Heaven, that the firſt good action of my life, in diſcovering to you the unnatural treaſon, of which you are going to be made the victim; grant, Heaven, I ſay, that this good action may be followed by a ſincere repentance. Yeſterday evening, on your account, I, for the firſt time in my life, felt remorſe: till that moment, madam, I ſwallowed iniquity like water, and I gloried in a project, which muſt have rendered you miſerable; when, of a ſudden, it came into my mind, what injury has the innocent Clariſſa done you? Was it not, on the contrary, ſhe who could not reſolve to let you live in that ſtate of neceſſity, to which you were born; who, out of her own immediate bounty, added a hundred pounds ſterling to that penſion that was deſired for you, and who has made herſelf the mother of your children? I hardened not my heart againſt this juſt motion, but, fearing that the malignity of my nature might overcome the mercy of God, I immediately called for ſuccour againſt myſelf.

myſelf. I am born a catholic, though ſince the fourteenth year of my age I have totally neglected my religion. I knew there was a zealous eccleſiaſtic, who lived near me: I ſent to him to come to me, and I diſcovered to him the diabolical ſnare which was laid to deſtroy you: he charged me to write you an account of it, and he will truſt no one but himſelf, to deliver it to the girl whom you honour with your friendſhip, and whoſe name I have told him.

You are upon the point of marrying my ſon, and perhaps your own brother: this wretched fruit of my crimes was taken from me by the marquis of Montalvo, who diſputed with your father the right of paternity. Piouſly educated under the care of the marquis, who, ſince his marriage, has renounced the errors of his youth, my unfortunate child ſeemed by his virtues to repair the crime of his birth; he entered into a religious order, very auſtere, and for ſeveral years ſeemed content with his ſituation; but I perceive, beyond a doubt, that he is the ſon of Mr. Darby: the perverſeneſs of his character diſcovers the ſource of his blood: he, by degrees, grew cold in the duties of his profeſſion, which at length he abandoned, and, eſcaping from his monaſtery, came to me in London,

where your father has ſecretly brought me. He hoped to engage you to live ſome time there: your repugnance for this town increaſed the hatred he bears you, for he cannot think, without horror, that you are in poſſeſſion of a fortune, which he conſiders as his own right, and which he deſigned for our children. He thought my ſon ſufficiently depraved to enter into his deſigns of vengeance; he knew, that the marquis of Montalvo, with whom he has been at variance for theſe two years, had ſent his ſon into England for ſix months, in order to learn the language. He found the circumſtance favourable: the ſums of money you have ſo generouſly given him, have ſerved to aſſiſt his cheat; and, in order to procure a protection, both he and my wretched ſon have abjured the Roman catholic religion, before the biſhop of London, who, imagining them ſincere, has conceived a great regard for them; Mr. Darby has alſo promiſed to bring his wife and daughter into the pale of the church of England: he flatters not himſelf, however, with hopes of ſucceſs; and here follows the reſt of his frightful project. A conſiderable ſum of money gained over the attorney employed to take a copy of your aunt's will. Had the poor dean of Colburn been ſuffered to live, he would have confounded all thoſe machinations; but the monſter,

monſter, whom you have received into your houſe, his former ſervant, found means to put him out of the way. Your father, in order to turn theſe crimes to account, found himſelf under a neceſſity of committing new ones. You muſt be ſurprized into a marriage with ſome wretch, who, content with a ſmall part of your portion, would give the reſt up to him. The falſe will, gives you a right to diſpoſe of your fortune, when you marry; and, as your good heart was well known, it was not doubted but you would, with pleaſure, come into any meaſures, to inſure the happineſs of your family. My ſon is afterwards to take you into Germany, and endeavour, by love and aſſiduity, to make you forget the deceit put upon you; but you are never to know his double apoſtacy. The perſon to marry you, is an apoſtate monk, my ſon's companion; for they would have your marriage as good as poſſible, in regard to law, in order to ſecure the validity of the following deed. There is nothing more remains for me, madam, but to beg a thouſand pardons for the hand I have had in this black conſpiracy: it is eaſy for you to puniſh me, by revealing the ſecret of my intelligence. Your father will regard an additional crime as a trifle, and my death will, in ſome ſort, ſeem a recompence for the failure of

his project: but, the truth is, you will gain nothing by ſhewing my letter; the worthy clergyman, who bears it, will copy it in his own hand, ſo that I may deny it for mine: add, that, was the affair brought to a legal proof, it would conduct your father to the gallows; he merits to loſe his life, but it is not for his daughter to take it. After having read theſe horrors, you will not, I apprehend, find it difficult to feign a ſudden indiſpoſition; gain a day, take the advantage of it, and put yourſelf into a place of ſecurity; it is the only advice that can be given you by the criminal, but penitent

M. COSBY.

CLARISSA *in Continuation.*

WAS not the reading of this fatal letter enough to kill me? The deſire of eſcaping from the danger, alone ſuſtained my ſpirits, and I reſolved to follow the counſel of this woman, whom the mercy of God made the inſtrument of my preſervation. Heavens! upon the point of being united for ever to a ſacrilegious monſter! My blood froze in my veins at the thought of it; and when I returned into the parlour, my mother ſcreamed, on ſeeing me totter as I walked, and my face covered with

with the ſhades of death: ſhe ran to me, and took me in her arms; at the moment my force failed me; however, I did not ſwoon away, and that was my misfortune. Montalvo approached to ſupport me: but I cried out, Retire, monſter, whom hell has vomitted for my ruin. It is to this imprudence that I muſt attribute all the miſeries I have ſince ſuffered. A little diſſimulation would have given me time to conſult my mother and my—O! I have no courage to pronounce that name, which had ſuch charms for me. Mr. Darby, I ſay, would have attributed my ſituation to a phyſical cauſe; and, having no reaſon to ſuſpect my knowledge of his wicked conſpiracy, would have conſented to a delay, which he would not have thought dangerous; but my horror for Montalvo let him ſee at once I was inſtructed in all; and, deſpairing to deceive, he determined to force me. I am betrayed, cried he, in a tranſport; but I will not deſcend to the unneceſſary meanneſs of a feint, to diſpoſe of a creature, whoſe artifices have robbed me of my right. Approach, ſaid he to the clergyman, and inſtantly marry theſe two perſons: and you, ſaid he to me, with a look wherein was painted the blackeſt fury, make haſte to ſeize the only means, to give you

back a father. I will forget all, if you will immediately become the wife of Montalvo.

This terrible diſcourſe, which one would have thought enough to deſtroy me, on the contrary, gave me new ſtrength. Hope not, anſwered I, with vivacity, to force from me a conſent which outrages nature: take all I poſſeſs, I conſent; but to avoid a death the moſt cruel, I will not be obliged to commit the crime you have propoſed to me: and you, ſaid I to the prieſt, who advanced towards me, remember that there is an avenging God, and fear, leſt his thunder ſhould reduce you inſtantly to powder, if you dare undertake to tye thoſe criminal bonds, which I refuſe to receive. At theſe words, my furious father threw himſelf upon me; and, without doubt, would have taken away my life, if my poor mother had not expoſed her's, to ſave it. I little felt the ſtrokes he had given me; but, O Heavens! how thoſe he ſtruck my mother, tore my bleeding heart! I threw myſelf at his feet, begging with cries, that he would take his proper victim, and ſpare his wife, who was not guilty of my rebellion to his will. Montalvo, ſpite of his wickedneſs, was touched at the danger in which he ſaw me, and forced me out of his hands. It was a long time before my father would

would liſten to any one; at length, however, getting him to the other ſide of the room, Montalvo ſpoke to him, for ſome time, with great ſeeming animation. During this interval, I threw myſelf at my mother's feet, which I bathed with my tears, without being able to utter a ſyllable; the aſtoniſhed prieſt ſtanding without motion, till Montalvo called him; probably to fortify the advice he had given my father, to avoid a diſcovery to the world of what might ruin him; and endeavour to reduce me by gentler methods. Return thanks to love, ſaid Mr. Darby: I give you four and twenty hours to do, with a good grace, that which I require of you; but hope not for a longer delay; you ſhall be the wife of Montalvo, either willingly, or by force. Follow me both of you. With theſe words, he accompanied me and my mother into an obſcure cloſet, at the extremity of the houſe, which had but one window, or, rather, hole, near the top, which, even in the day time, ſcarce admitted light. I made no reſiſtance; the comfortable thought of being alone with my mother, and at liberty to bewail myſelf, entirely took me up: but in what a condition was I, when I knew the intention of my perſecutors. They gagged my mother, to ſtifle her cries, and tore her from my dungeon; while hands, which

I ſcarce reſpected, in the ſituation to which I was reduced, held me immoveable to my place. My cries, which, in the parlour, might have alarmed the ſervants, were uſeleſs in a place where they were ſtifled. I ſcreamed, however; I called Heaven to help me, and protect my mother; I endeavoured to diſengage myſelf, to fly to her aſſiſtance. Vain efforts! they dragged me away; and Mr. Darby, letting me go, daſhed me with ſuch violence to the floor, that I was terribly bruiſed: he then went out, and ſhut the door after him. My firſt attention was to faſten it within ſide, with two bolts, placed there for that purpoſe, and I reſolved to die with hunger rather than open it. This, in ſome meaſure, tranquilized me; and I knelt down to implore the aſſiſtance of God, with an ardour which ſurely reached Heaven, ſince it gave me a deſire and means to break my chains. I had every thing to fear for my mother's life: Mr. Darby, in his rage, had let eſcape the horrible deſign to make her life depend upon my marriage. Ah! if my own alone had been in danger, I could have braved death and torments; but an intereſt more dear laid hold of my heart. While I was yet praying, I heard a key put in the door: as it turned round without effect, and they perceived the obſtacle that kept the door

from

from opening; the odious Montalvo raiſed his voice, and conjured me, out of regard to my own ſafety, to condeſcend to honour him with a quarter of an hour's converſation. Had I liſtened only to my indignation, I ſhould have anſwered him with the juſt reproaches his crimes deſerved; but I had conceived ſome hopes of eſcaping, and that reſtrained me. I have four and twenty hours to fix my laſt reſolution, ſaid I to him; hope not to ſee me before that time, and remember that my determination depends on the treatment my mother meets. Ah, charming Clariſſa, replied the monſter, would you could read my heart; however filled it may be with love for you, you would find more remorſe there than tenderneſs. A criminal like me dares not call Heaven to witneſs his oaths: I conſent, however, this moment, to receive the puniſhment it owes my crimes, if I am not ſincere in my repentance; if I have not made a vow to repair the injuries I have done you. For your own ſake, feign to conſent to your father's deſigns, you ſhall not be leſs miſtreſs of your fate; with my own life I will anſwer for that of your reſpectable mother. We ſhall ſee to-morrow, ſaid I, how far your repentance may be depended on; and, till that time, I only deſire you to let me be quiet.

How

How eaſy it is to impoſe upon an innocent heart! I thought I could perceive the tone of truth in the promiſes of Montalvo. Is there a man raſh enough to invoke the vengeance of Heaven, at the time he provokes it by his treaſons? If the promiſes of that wretch were ſincere—but has he reſpected thoſe he made to God, when he engaged himſelf in the ſervice of the altar? Can his penitence ſubſiſt with the criminal paſſion, with which he confeſſes yet to burn? Heavens! I ſhould render myſelf an accomplice of his crime, was I to confide in his oaths. Let me fly then, though at the riſque of my life: God, who only puniſhes the will, knows that I abridge not my days by choice.

There was, in the place where I was ſhut up, a very narrow chimney; I did not deſpair, however, of being able to ſqueeze up it, and arrive at the top of the houſe. If you aſk me what I deſigned to do when I got there, I cannot tell; if it was to go off, I had not conſidered whether the height would not be an obſtacle to my enterprize; I recommended myſelf to God, before I attempted to mount this narrow paſſage, and more than once I was afraid I ſhould ſtick by the way: at length, however, with the aſſiſtance of my hands and feet, I gained the top, where I

was

was obliged to ſtay, for ſome moments, to take my breath; afterwards, by the pale light of the ſtars, I caſt my eyes on all ſides, to ſee if I could not diſcover a place where the deſcent was eaſy: I knew there was a little building at the end of my houſe, much lower than it; and, if I could be happy enough to come at it, I might ſlide, without danger, from one roof to another, and arrive below; I thought it would be eaſy to come to the ground on the ſide of the garden, where it was not above fifteen feet high; but I had a long way to ſcramble, and how ſhould I avoid falling? However, I had no choice, and reſolved to hazard all, for all. On horſeback then, as I may ſay, upon the ridge of the roof, one leg on one ſide, and one on the other, I, with great aukwardneſs, pain and danger, ſometimes on my ſtomach, ſometimes by the help of my hands, at length reached the end. That moment, I heard Windſor clock ſtrike twelve, and it was well I had got to my journey's end; the ſky began to grow darker, the ſtars diſappeared, every thing foretold a ſtorm, and I had ſcarce gained the garden, when the little light, I till then had, entirely failed: there was yet a wall to get over, not ſo high as the buildings I had already dropped from, yet I found greater difficulties; I attempted to mount, but fell; my foot got under

me

me in ſuch a manner, that, with the pain, I was above an hour before I could ſtir from the place; however, my fall being on the outſide of the garden, I was, in ſome ſort, happy; my fears of falling again into the hands of my perſecutors, gave me new ſtrength; and, as well as I was able to judge, I ſet out towards Windſor: and, though a dreadful rain pierced me to the ſkin, I advanced courageouſly towards the place, where I hoped to find an aſylum: I knew there were in the caſtle ſome ladies of rank, and I reſolved to throw myſelf at the feet of the firſt to whom Providence ſhould bring me, intreating her to hide me for a few days, till I ſhould learn ſome news of my mother, determining to let them believe what they would of my condition, rather than accuſe him, notwithſtanding his cruelty to me, whom it was my duty to reſpect. But Heaven diſpoſed things in a different manner. I had not walked above a quarter of an hour, when the anguiſh of my foot began to relent. I made my advantage of it, and doubled my pace, ſo that in three hours I had not gone leſs than ſeven miles acroſs the fields: I perceived that I had miſſed my way, but it was in vain to think of regaining it, and I only thought of getting farther from Old Windſor; ſo that, by break of day, I might arrive at ſome place, where a carriage

riage might be taken for London. My foot began again to grow uneaſy; when I heard the clock ſtrike four, and, caſting my eyes toward the place from whence the ſound came, I ſaw that I was between two villages, to the neareſt of which, I began to make all poſſible haſte, when I perceived, at a diſtance, ſomething coming towards me. I ſoon diſcovered that it was a woman, carrying a baſket. A few moments before, I would gladly have aſked her aſſiſtance; but the ſound of the clock and the view of the ſteeple, denoted a conſiderable town, where I hoped to find ſome good inn; I had money enough in my pocket, to procure a ſhort reception there, and a carriage, which was all I wanted. While I made theſe reflections, the woman approached, and lifting up her hands and eyes in admiration: And from what pretty place did you come, my fine lady? ſaid ſhe brutiſhly: I warrant you have ran away from ſome good houſe, where the bullies would have drubbed you. She advanced to have a nearer view of me, but I croſſed the road; and, as ſoon as I had loſt ſight of her, fear, leſt curioſity ſhould make her turn back to inſult me, made me leap a ditch, and ſcramble over a hedge, which ſeparated a field of corn from the high road. I croſſed it, and ſaw, with pleaſure, that it conducted

ducted to a double hedge, in the middle of which there was a lane, which ſeemed to lead to the place where I wanted to be. The woman's diſcourſe occaſioned me to reflect upon the diſorder of my dreſs, which before I had not thought of; and judging that it would be imprudent to appear ſo adorned, I ſat down under a little tree to take off my diamonds and pearls. My deſign was to tuck my robe into a white petticoat, which I wore under it, and to wrap myſelf up in a capuchin, which I had accidentally put in my pocket on coming from a walk in the garden the evening before. I thought myſelf, in the ſolitary place I then was, ſufficiently ſheltered from curious eyes; but what was my aſtoniſhment, to ſee, about twenty paces from me, a man, with a naked ſword under his arm. At that inſtant, every thing I had to fear the moſt terrible, offered itſelf to my imagination, already troubled and diſtracted; and ſeeing that there was no hopes of eſcape, I aroſe upon my knees, throwing my purſe at a little diſtance from me: Have pity, ſaid I, upon an unhappy young woman, and take not advantage of the misfortunes, which put her into your power: there is my purſe, you have it with all my heart; take alſo theſe diamonds; I only beg, in return, that you will leave me at liberty to go where I pleaſe, and to

tell

me whether I may hope to find a carriage in the village which is before us. The man ſtopped on hearing my voice, and conſidering me from head to foot, ſeemed at a loſs to imagine, by what accident a girl like me, could come into ſuch a place, in a dreſs ſo unſuitable to my ſeeming circumſtances. After a ſhort ſilence, he ſaid to me, in broken Engliſh, Take back your money and your diamonds, and tell me, if I can do you any ſervice? If you think you ought not to accept my offer, ſay but the word, and I will go away. I confeſs, however, I ſhall do it with regret; you may fall into bad hands; I fancy you are not of a rank to beg a ſhelter in a common inn; and, for a carriage, I aſſure you, you will not find one in all the village.

The countenance of this man was ſo beautiful, the ſound of his voice ſo moving, his air ſo reſpectful, that, in an inſtant, my fears deſerted me. You are not Engliſh, ſir, ſaid I to him. No, madam, anſwered he, I am French; and all the men of that nation, regard it as a duty incumbent on them, to devote themſelves to the aſſiſtance of the fair ſex, when they are unfortunate. It was in French he made me this reply, as I ſpoke to him in that language. May I aſk you, ſaid I, of what religion you are? Are you

you a French refugee? I do not know with what deſign you aſk the queſtion, anſwered he, but though it may poſſibly diminiſh that confidence which you ſeem willing to repoſe in me, I will make no ſcruple to confeſs, that I have the honour and happineſs of being a Roman catholic. Great God, cried I, raiſing my eyes to Heaven, have you ſent me a protector? After this ſhort exclamation, I ſaid to the young man, the ingenuity with which you have declared your faith, without knowing mine, engages me to truſt you. Could you procure me a ſafe harbour for ſome hours, furniſh me with proper cloaths, and get me a carriage? Nothing more eaſy, ſays he, if you will accept of my poor lodging: I live with a maſter, a very honeſt man, and am the only ſervant in his houſe; you may ſhut yourſelf up in my chamber till the evening, by which time, I will procure you a ſafe conveyance to London, or where elſe you pleaſe. I had not yet taken notice of the dreſs of him who ſpoke to me; it diſagreed with his figure; and the powder, with which his coat was filled, informed me that I ſpoke to a perriwig-maker. What muſt the politeneſs of a French gentleman be, when I find ſo much in a man of this claſs? You will not oblige one ungrateful, replied I, riſing: it is in my power to make your fortune, and I promiſe

promiſe I will do it: indeed you ſeem to be born above your preſent ſtation. At theſe words, the young man bluſhed exceedingly. I ſhould be greatly concerned, ſaid he, to find myſelf ſuſpected of any baſe and intereſted views, in the little ſervice I am willing to do you. I am poor, 'tis true; but my poverty does not make me unhappy, though I have reaſon to bluſh for the cauſe. With regard to my profeſſion, I confeſs it is new to me; but it, in ſome meaſure, re-eſtabliſhes me in my own eſteem, as a deſire to fulfil my duty holds me to it. My aſtoniſhment augmented at every word he ſpoke; his reſpectful and genteel carriage ſurprized me ſtill more. My foot, which was extremely ſwelled, began to give me more pain as it grew cold. The ſtranger perceived that I could ſcarce walk; but, inſtead of offering me his arm, he plucked a ſtake from the hedge to ſerve me for a ſtaff: his reſpectful modeſty, on this occaſion, ſtrengthened my good opinion of him ſo far, that I thought I ran no riſque in deſiring leave to lean upon him. We ſpoke little during the reſt of the way, which lay ſtill between the hedges, till we came to the end of a wall with two or three doors; my conductor opened one, and brought me into a little chamber, after having firſt croſſed a garden, belonging to a ſmall houſe, where it was the firſt floor.

floor. This looks to the ſtreet, ſays he; and if you have any ſuſpicions of me, you may make yourſelf eaſy in the thought, that you have nothing to do but call out. Saying theſe words, he ſhewed me the ſtreet, which was broad, and the houſes tolerably handſome. You are here, ſaid he, in ſecurity; here is the key of my room, which I will enter no more, without your leave. Only permit me to knock now and then, to ſee if you want any thing; and if you think you owe me any acknowledgment, condeſcend to give me a proof of it, by accepting a diſh of chocolate, which I am now going to bring you. Sir, ſaid I, I entertain not the leaſt doubt of you, and willingly accept the refreſhment you offer, which, indeed, I have great need of, being almoſt overcome; and, when your buſineſs will permit, I can do nothing better than conſult with you upon the ſteps neceſſary for me to take. Perhaps, my dear Harriet, you may think me too confiding; but there are figures to whom we can refuſe nothing; and till this moment that I write to you, I have no reaſon to think I have truſted too far. My guide came back, with ſome biſcuits and a diſh of chocolate, and told me, he was then obliged to quit me, to open his ſhop. As the chamber was but low, and nothing but a ſimple floor of planks, without plaiſtering, divided

divided from the ſhop, I could eaſily hear every word that was ſpoke there; and for that reaſon I ſat down in a corner, not daring to ſtir, for fear of diſcovering myſelf. Preſently I heard a perſon talking, who was, without doubt, the maſter of the ſhop: he ſaid to his man; You are come very early, my poor chevalier, I will lay my life you have not eat a bit ſince yeſterday evening, for you would rather come faſting, than eat or drink with my lord's ſervants; poverty and pride go ill together, my friend, and you ought to change your manners; I, who am your maſter, eat with thoſe people, and what right have you to deſpiſe them? I do not deſpiſe them, replied my guide, but I was afraid you would want me; beſides, I was more ſleepy than hungry. Ay, ay, ſaid the maſter, I know you; however, you may have occaſion for ſome hours reſt; ſo go up, and throw yourſelf upon your bed, we ſhall have nothing to do all day. As the maſter finiſhed theſe words, I heard ſeveral horſes in a hard gallop, ſome of which ſtopped before the ſhop. I do not know why, I was ſeized with an involuntary horror; but how were my fears augmented, when I heard the voice of Mr. Derby, who aſked, if they had not ſeen a young woman, dreſſed in ſuch a manner, deſcribing directly my cloaths; there is a hundred guineas,

ſaid he, for thoſe who will bring her back to her parents. A ſtroke of thunder would not more have ſhocked me. What a temptation for a young man! He had told me he was poor; will he ſcruple to gain ſuch a ſum of money with ſo much eaſe? But I immediately reproached myſelf for the thought, as an act of ingratitude. The maſter replied, that he had but that moment opened his ſhop, and that ſuch a perſon might have paſſed an hundred times without his ſeeing her. I had better luck, replied a woman, who was ſweeping the next door; I met her, juſt at day-break, about three quarters of a mile from the town; ſhe croſſed the fields, and made as faſt as ſhe could towards London: if I had known what was to be got by it, I ſhould have made her ſlacken her pace. Judge of my fright, my dear: I, literally ſpeaking, dared not breathe, leſt even my very breath ſhould be heard. But happily the horſemen no ſooner underſtood that I was gone for London, than they took that route at a full ſtretch. O Providence! cried I to myſelf, what would have become of me, had not the meeting of that woman obliged me to quit the high-road? But by what inchantment could they ſo ſoon diſcover my flight, and follow at my heels, and put themſelves exactly in my tract? The arrival of my benefactor interrupted my reflections.

flections. On entering the chamber, he put his finger upon his mouth, as much as to ſay Silence; and pointing to a door which opened into another room, he made ſigns for me to go into it. We ſhould be over-heard there, ſaid he, ſetting me a chair. Ah, madam, how was I frightened for you juſt now; but, perhaps, you already know the ſubject of my terrors; you muſt certainly have heard—Alas I heard all, ſaid I; what obligations have I not to you, and what acknowledgments! Talk not to me of acknowledgments, anſwered he, interrupting me, only let me know what is farther to be done, to ſave you from the dangers which threaten you: who are your perſecutors? Could you not apply to juſtice againſt them? There is a magiſtrate in the town, a very honeſt gentleman; ſhall I demand of him an aſylum for you, more proper than what I can offer?

I melted into tears, and was a good while before I could anſwer him; at length, I conquered myſelf ſo far, as to tell my protector, the exceſs of my misfortune was ſuch, that I could not hate my moſt cruel enemy: it is my father, ſaid I; and I would die an hundred times, rather than do him an injury: I fly to avoid an odious marriage: a mother, whom I love more than my-

ſelf, is in danger of becoming the victim of my refuſal; my firſt, my only deſire, is to be reunited to her. How many horſemen were after me? Five, anſwered the young man. We had no more in the houſe, replied I. Ah, ſir, how ſhould I bleſs your goodneſs, if you had the courage to go to Old Windſor, to enquire for the houſe of miſs Derby, and in that houſe for her chambermaid Fanny. If you could, by her means, draw my mother from the danger to which ſhe is expoſed, and bring her to a place, where I may this night go to her, my life would ſcarcely ſuffice to acquit the obligation. There are certain actions, ſaid the young man, which carry their recompence along with them, in the eyes of an honeſt man: but we loſe time in talking; Old Windſor is but four miles from hence; I fly—But, madam, this is the moment of my life, in which my poverty is moſt vexatious to me; ſome accident might happen to render money neceſſary. I underſtand you, ſaid I, preſenting my purſe. Five guineas will be enough, ſaid he: reſt quiet here, no one has a key to my chamber but myſelf; and you will know, by my cracking the whip, when you ſhall come to the door of the other room, in order to let me in.

He

He did not wait for my anſwer, but ſaluted me with a grace, ſomewhat uncommon in a man of his rank. He went down, and ſaid in the ſhop, loud enough for me to hear him, I find my drowſineſs is gone off; and, ſince you have no occaſion for me, I will try to refreſh myſelf, by taking the air a little on horſeback.

CLARISSA *in Continuation.*

WHO would believe, that, in the midſt of inquietude and perturbation, ſleep ſhould for a moment be able to ſuſpend my ſenſe of affliction? What do I ſay? Alas, it ſeems to have fallen upon me only to augment my power of feeling, by re-eſtabliſhing my worn-out faculties. What frightful images have aſſailed my ſoul, during my ſlumber! I thought I ſaw my preſerver become that of my mother; he was bringing her to me, when he met her cruel huſband; the valiant young man endeavoured to defend her from five others, who would have raviſhed her from him; I ſaw him fall, covered with wounds. My mother, who ſtrove to ſave his life at the expence of her own, fell by his ſide. Their blood ran from them in a mingled ſtream, and my protector cried, I am rejoiced to ſhed it for Clariſſa. On a ſudden, the earth opened,

and ſwallowed my unfortunate father. Montalvo fell at my feet, and joining my hand with that of the expiring youth, I repair, ſaid he, the injuries I have done you. The whole diſappeared, and I ſaw you at my ſide; but with ſo cold and diſtant an air, that I dare not expreſs the pleaſure I felt at the ſight of you: Mr. Balfour took you ſuddenly by the arm, and cried, let us fly, let us fly. I ran after, and endeavoured to hold you; and the anxiety I was in, awakened me in a cold ſweat, and I was ready to faint. How weak is your poor friend! In vain do I ſay to myſelf, this dream is nothing, but the effects of the dangers I have gone through, during the laſt twenty-four hours, and thoſe which I yet fear. It leaves an impreſſion of terror that I am not able to diſſipate. What! will not Heaven grant to my ardent prayers, the converſion of my wretched father? Muſt he be an eternal victim of the juſt anger of an avenging God? Ah! let him take my life; in ſatisfaction for his crimes, or let me ſuffer all the puniſhments due to them here, ſo that he may be ſaved hereafter. Terrible as the image of my dying mother and friend appear, I ſhould have nothing to fear, methinks, for their future welfare. My mother had filled the meaſure of her virtues, and the generous youth thinks too nobly for vice ever to pervert him.

Inno-

Innocence, candour and gentleneſs, ſeem printed on his face. May Heaven deign to be his recompence, and put it into my power not to die ungrateful. O, could he but unite me to my tender mother!—Why will the author of my days diſhonour his rank, while a man, born, no doubt, in the obſcureſt claſs, ſhews ſentiments worthy of a prince?

A curioſity, which I in vain reproach myſelf with, obliges me to interrupt my letter. Paper, ſcattered upon a table, may give me ſome lights, as to the character of him, into whoſe power I am obliged to put myſelf. Heavens! if his beautiful outſide ſhould hide a heart wicked and corrupt! Had not Montalvo, like him, a ſeducing form? Who knows if this curioſity, which I combat and condemn, be not an inſpiration from Heaven, to warn me to fly a danger, equal to that from whence I have eſcaped? I give way to the temptation; my intention, in ſome meaſure, juſtifies an action, which, at any other time, and in any other circumſtances I ſhould account criminal.

If I was to conceal what my curioſity has diſcovered, you might imagine it diſadvantageous to my protector. In the firſt place then he is

called Chevalier: that name is upon the addreſs of the letter, which can be for none but him, for his profeſſion is ſet down: I was not a little ſurpriſed at the ſeal which was upon the cover, being the arms of nobility; the hand a woman's. I looked at the letter. A perriwig-maker, thought I, has not uſually ſuch correſpondents. I found nothing, and I am not ſorry for it. I have nothing to fear from a mean man, the meanneſs of his birth will prevent his lifting his eyes to me, and make me better able to defend myſelf againſt a merit, which, unallayed by that circumſtance, would make too ſtrong impreſſions upon me. What have I ſaid, my dear Harriet? Give me time to examine my heart.

Thank Heaven, I find myſelf incapable of forgetting the blood from whence I have ſprung. My ſentiments of gratitude were ſo ſtrong, that I began to be afraid. Ought they to be otherwiſe? No, I would tear my heart, if it was leſs ſenſible. To what dangers may this poor young man be now expoſed for my ſake, if the frightful dream ſhould become reality? Let me turn from the dreadful thought, I cannot ſupport it.

There are a great many verſes among theſe papers, and they are by no means to be ranked among

among the indifferent: If he is not a poet, he loves poetry.—A taſte ſingular enough, for a man like him. His choice of ſome pieces he has copied out, ſhew his diſcernment. O Heavens! I hear the ſignal which he gave me! What, returned already! I have hardly ſtrength enough to go and open the door.

What things have I to tell you my dear! I am loſt in confuſion! O fatal voyage! It was Heaven, which, in its anger againſt me, laid you under a neceſſity of leaving England. Yet will I not murmur. O my God, am I not your creature; in duty bound to ſubmit to your decrees, however rigorous they may ſeem? have you not ſhewed yourſelf my protector, in favouring my eſcape from the worſt of evils? You will finiſh your work, you will cover with your wings the moſt virtuous of women; you will reſtore me to her arms, and thoſe of my tender friend; or, if you refuſe me theſe bleſſings, of which I am not worthy, you will give me ſtrength to ſupport the affliction. Here follows the melancholy account brought by Chevalier.

"Being arrived at an inn in Old Windſor, he was a long time before he was able to attract the attention of the landlord, whom he aſked

for ſomething to eat; and of the ſervant, whom he deſired to put his horſe in the ſtable: every thing ſeemed there in diſorder and confuſion. At laſt the landlady came in, crying out, No, they ſhall never perſuade me, I will never believe that madam Darby, or her daughter, have acted in the leaſt contrary to their duty; poor Fanny ſays ſo; and the brute of a buttler threattens her, as if it was a crime in the eyes of his maſter, to aſſert that he has the beſt wife, and moſt virtuous daughter in the world. Why did you not ſend for the poor girl here, replies the landlord? I have always had a bad opinion of this James, I do not think her over ſafe with him. Run, call her, ſays he to the maid, deſire her to drink a diſh of tea with us, the poor girl, I am certain, has not been able to breakfaſt. Then, perceiving Chevalier, who yet held the bridle of his horſe, I beg pardon, ſir, for having made you wait; you ſee us entirely in diſorder, will you pleaſe to breakfaſt with us? With all my heart, replies Chevalier, I will willingly drink tea with you, provided you give me ſomething more ſubſtantial: give me, if you pleaſe, a little meat, for I will not ſtop any more between this and London. But may I take the liberty of enquiring what has happened new in this quarter?"

Truly, ſays the landlady, we know nothing more at preſent, than a flying report: but ſee, Mrs. Fanny, the chambermaid of an excellent young lady that has been carried off, ſhe will tell us every thing that happened.

Fanny's eyes were extremely red, and it was eaſily ſeen ſhe had wept much. She ſhewed a great deal of prudence in every thing ſhe ſaid. Her young miſtreſs eſcaped in the night; the tract of her footſteps in the garden lead to the wall; and the ſame marks, on the other ſide, ſhewed the road ſhe had taken. Mr. Darby, Montalvo, and three ſervants, purſued her ſome hours after. Montalvo and James returned to the houſe; the firſt went to a private chamber, where Mrs. Darby was, and having forced the lock, James, who would have oppoſed his entrance, was very much beat. After half an hour's converſation, his miſtreſs was forced into a poſt-chaiſe, which Montalvo eſcorted on horſeback. The cries of James had alarmed the whole village; he cried out, that his maſter was betrayed; that, after having ſtole his daughter, they forcibly carried off his wife. But Mrs. Darby having ſaid ſomething or other, every thing was quieted. She added, that the infamous James, threatened to put her in the hands

of juſtice as a thief, becauſe ſhe had aſſiſted her young miſtreſs in breaking open the drawers, to take out her diamonds. All the people of the houſe and the neighbours, exclaimed greatly againſt this baſeneſs, and adviſed Fanny to go to Windſor, and ſwear the peace againſt this ſervant, and offered their ſervice to conduct her there. No, ſays Fanny, I will embarraſs no one in my affairs; provided a horſe can be found me, I ſhall go very well alone to make my depoſition. Chevalier then took up the converſation. I have ſome buſineſs at Windſor, ſaid he to her, and I can dine there as well as here; I offer you to ride behind me; and, as I have the honour of being known to a neighbouring magiſtrate, I have no doubt but he will do your young lady all imaginable juſtice: I aſk but one recompence for my ſervices; inform me to-morrow of the ſequel of this affair. I intereſt myſelf in this lady's fortune, and, if I was not obliged to be this day in London, on very urgent buſineſs, I would put off my journey.

Fanny bleſſed a thouſand times, the gentleman who was ſo kind and good-natured; and, before ſhe quitted the houſe, emptied her pockets and ſhook her petticoats, after having had them examined by ſeveral women, to ſhew that ſhe carried

ried nothing away. The landlord was generous enough to inſiſt upon Chevalier's accepting of his breakfaſt, but he would pay his reckoning, and threw a guinea upon the table, leaving five ſhillings for his breakfaſt and the dinner he had ordered; which raiſed him greatly in the people's opinion, who took him for a man of conſequence, for he had borrowed a great-coat in the village, which concealed his dreſs.

Chevalier had not got above half a mile from the village, when he diſcovered himſelf to my maid. The poor girl almoſt fainted with joy, on hearing him mention my name; ſhe would fein have been carried to me directly; but the chevalier convinced her, that ſhe might be more uſeful to me at Old Windſor, from whence ſhe could give us daily notice of the meaſures that were concerting, in order to diſcover me. They agreed that the ſteps ſhe had hitherto taken, were abſolutely neceſſary for her own ſecurity. But as ſhe was afraid, leſt I ſhould be uneaſy at Chevalier's ſtay, ſhe begged he would make all the haſte to me he could, and ſhe returned herſelf on foot.—If the deſire of information concerning my abandoned houſe and family did not detain me where I at preſent am, I have another ſtrong reaſon for not ſtirring. James ſaid, that

I ſhould

I ſhould be in my father's power in four and twenty hours, for that I had been deſcribed at all the turnpikes, and proper authority left to ſeize me wherever I came. To what extremity am I reduced, forced, in ſpite of decorum, to paſs the night with an unknown man. In this, I am more to be pitied than the Clariſſa of Mr. Richardſon, who was never left deſtitute of female companions. Yet, on comparing our adventures, I find mine the more ſupportable, if I could but be eaſy about the fate of my dear mother. I cannot reproach myſelf with being the cauſe of my own misfortunes, inevitable neceſſity juſtifies my flight, I did not voluntarily put myſelf under the protection of a man. This man is not, nor ever can be my lover; and if I had been to chuſe among all the human race, Mr. Balfour excepted, I do not believe I could have found a perſon, with whom I might remain in greater ſecurity. The letter which you will receive from me by next poſt, will ſhew you that I ſpeak this on good foundation; and my preſent ſituation, excuſes the indiſcreet favour I am going to beg of you. I am as ſafe at this place, as I can be any where elſe; and as Fanny is to come and ſtay with me, as ſoon as ſhe ceaſes to be uſeful to us at Old Windſor, I am determined to keep here, till I ſee the end of my misfortunes,

misfortunes, which I ſhall think entirely paſt, the moment I have it in my power to throw myſelf into Mr. Balfour's protection, and go with him into France. I know that, at my age, a daughter is ſtill in the power of her father; mine may claim me, though I know, at the ſame time, the abjuration of his right, formally made to my aunt, will, in ſome meaſure, weaken that claim, and mitigate the power he received from nature; but I will expoſe myſelf to every thing, rather than ſtigmatize the author of my being. He may forget that I am his daughter, but I will never forget that he is my father; and, with the aſſiſtance of Heaven, I will always act according to my duty in that quality. The beſt method then is, to fly my country, and abandon my poſſeſſions: my fortune is what he wiſhes for; let him have it, and reſtore me his affections; and I hope Mr. Balfour, as ſoon as he ſees this letter, will have the goodneſs to ſet out. It is with infinite pain I propoſe ſuch a parting in your preſent ſituation; but it is the only thing which can juſtify my flight in the eyes of the public, as I cannot, nor will diſcloſe the true reaſons of it. His eſpouſing my intereſt, will be ſufficient to convince the world, I have done nothing wrong. It is prudence alone that makes me wait here till Mr. Balfour arrives, for Chevalier

lier offers to conduct me ſecurely into France; and I ſhould have no ſcruples to venture with him, if all the world knew him as well as I fancy I do; but Mr. Darby might, perhaps, take ſuch an occaſion to villify me; and, if one ought to ſuffer with patience the loſs of reputation when God orders it, I regard a juſt care for its preſervation, among the moſt ſacred duties; and I have always theſe words in my ear, *Curſed be thoſe who are the cauſe of ſcandal*, &c. Alas, I am fallen into that misfortune; in my opinion, the greateſt of all; my only conſolation is, the reſolution I have taken not to aggravate it. The poſt obliges me to finiſh. You ſhall hear from me again ſpeedily.

LETTER XXI.

CLARISSA TO LADY HARRIET.

AS I foreſee, my dear Harriet, that I ſhall have a great many things to ſay to you, I begin this letter a day before it can depart; and I take up the thread of my melancholy adventure at the place where the poſt forced me to break it off.

Chevalier's buſineſs obliged him to quit me, as ſoon as he had given an account of what he had heard and ſeen: he had that attention for me, that he brought a cold fowl in his pocket, with every thing neceſſary to ſupport a life, which, though threatened with misfortunes, God commands me to preſerve. I raiſed myſelf then, and, in ſpite of my deſponding condition, took ſome nouriſhment; which, I think, has given vigour to my fainting ſpirits. But two things above the reſt cauſe me mortal inquietude; particularly my fears for my dear and worthy mother: yet I could not help recollecting the promiſes Montalvo had made me a little before my flight; and, perhaps, the firſt effect of his repentance, ſaid I to myſelf, will be his care to preſerve the beſt of women, from the fury of a cruel

a cruel huſband: ſhe followed him willingly, and, to engage her to do ſo, he muſt have diſcovered to her all the machinations againſt us. Montalvo probably could conduct her only to his mother. The converſion of that poor woman was not equivocal; ſhe run a great riſk in writing the letter, which tended to my preſervation: ſuch beginnings carry one a great way, and I conſider her as a ſinner, whom God has choſen for an example of his mercy: and, even ſuppoſing her ſon's intentions againſt my mother were bad, when he bore her off, he might ſtill take her to his mother; not being inſtructed in the change God had wrought in her. How did I regret, at that moment, my not having waited for the effect of his promiſes: perhaps, ſaid I to myſelf, had I done that, I ſhould now be in the arms of my dear mother; but I ſoon conſidered again, that, in acting as I did, I had followed the rules of prudence; that is the guide which God gives us for our actions, and we are not reſponſible for their ſucceſs: yet perhaps I have confided too much in mine, and God takes pleaſure in rendering it abortive, to learn me henceforward to rely on his aſſiſtance.

I have quitted my pen a few moments, to run over in my mind this laſt reflection: in effect, I have

have reckoned too much upon happineſs; I imagined, what I promiſed myſelf was my own work; and I left, without perceiving it, that dependance upon God, which, for many years, I have been trained in dreadful conſequences of proſperity. I perceived, that for ſome months paſt, I was grown cooler in religious matters. This ſtrange diſgrace is, without doubt, a method uſed by the Father of mercies, to rouſe me from the lethargy, into which I had fallen unawares: if he is pleaſed again to reſtore me, may he never ſuffer me to relax into the ſame error. I have been, for an hour paſt, meditating upon a project, which may poſſibly put an end to my afflictions; and the inclination I have to ſee my mother at quiet, inſpires me with it. What is it that oppoſes the ſentiments of nature, in the heart of Mr. Darby? Is it not the rancour he has conceived, on account of my aunt's partiality in my favour? Can I eſteem a fortune, which cauſes me ſuch a loſs? No, better give it up to him. Indigence is but an imaginary evil; let him give me my mother, and take my wealth. Have we not a thouſand times agreed, that happineſs and riches can hardly dwell together? But there's a tap at my door; I fly to open it.

Sleep

Sleep flies from my eyes, my dear Harriet. The ſtrange project I was about to explain to you, when interrupted, preſents itſelf to my imagination in the moſt ſeducing forms; yet I have not courage, at preſent, to let you into it; perhaps I may conquer that baſhfulneſs before I finiſh my letter; in the mean while, I muſt tell you what has paſſed from the time my protector left me, to this, when I am again alone. One of my inquietudes was, the uneaſineſs I had at paſſing the night ſo near a ſtrange man: however great the eſteem with which his conduct has inſpired me, I know, that diffidence is the guardian of virtue: he did not put me to the pain of explaining what I felt upon this occaſion; but told me, on entering, that he had been taking the neceſſary meaſures to leave the chamber to myſelf that night, and that he had prevailed upon a friend to give him ſhare of his bed; but, ſays he, I conſtantly retire to my own room every evening, while my maſter paſſes two or three hours at a public houſe, and I take care to attend him with a light when he comes in. If I was to fail in this, he would be diſpleaſed, and perhaps might think me out of order: and in the laſt caſe, his regard for me is ſuch, that I am ſure he would not go to bed till he had looked after me, to ſee if I wanted any thing;

by

by which means our ſecret might be diſcovered. I am then obliged, madam, to aſk your permiſſion to wait in the adjoining chamber till my maſter goes out; and till he comes back again I will ſit in the ſhop, leaving you free from any diſturbance. At preſent, I thought it was better to be troubleſome to you, than give him any cauſe of ſuſpicion; I am come alſo to receive your commands. If you are forced, by ſome unforeſeen accident, to quit this aſylum, you will have occaſion for cloaths plainer than thoſe you at preſent wear: you will want linen, and a thouſand other neceſſaries. If your woman is not here to provide them for you, would it not be better to make a proviſion in time?

I praiſed the care and attention of my guardian; and, as I had a great inclination to be better acquainted with him, I took that opportunity to ſatisfy myſelf. I perceive, ſaid I, that you are fond of ſolitude: it is very laudable in ſo young a man, for you don't appear to be more than twenty: may I aſk how you employ yourſelf every evening? I love reading, anſwered Chevalier, but the want of good authors has been very irkſome to me, for near a twelvemonth, that I have been in England; but for a little time paſt, my profeſſion has procured me admit-

admittance into ſeveral good houſes, where I have procured Engliſh books. I begin to underſtand them, and greatly regret that I have not had occaſion or opportunity to read them: there are ſuch a number of good works in your language, that it is every man's duty to be acquainted with them. Excuſe, madam, my neglect, I ſhould have offered you my little library; it had made your time, perhaps, ſeem ſhorter. I never read romances, ſaid I. Have you any books of another kind? There are romances, ſaid he, that may be readwith pleaſure; however, I confeſs, few Engliſh authors have excelled in that way. I prefer books which treat of morals and ſcience; and, it muſt be confeſſed, that here we find an abundant ſource of riches, for thoſe who are more curious of inſtruction than entertainment. At preſent, I read the great Newton; and the hours I paſs with that author, glide away unperceived. I muſt repeat to you, ſaid I, what I once ſaid to you already, you are not made for the ſtation you are in: ſuch ſentiments and education tranſpire every moment, as ſpeak a man not born in meanneſs and obſcurity. I am young, replied Chevalier, yet more than half my life has been paſſed in a mediocrity, not far diſtant from indigence. I have lived by the works of my hands, like our firſt parents;

parents; and, the happineſs of relieving the wants of one, who ought to be dear to me, kept me from feeling any thing in my ſituation capable of giving me pain. Happy day! cried he, raiſing to Heaven his eyes, ſwimming with tears, ſome drops of which fell down his cheeks, I have loſt you without hopes of return, and the reſt of my deplorable life will be but a ſeries of unremitting deſpair. Pardon me, madam, ſaid he, I ought to repreſs theſe tranſports; and if I had nothing to complain of but misfortunes, methinks I ſhould diſdain to afflict myſelf; but I weep for faults, not misfortunes; and faults accompanied with remorſe, are evils, againſt which courage is unable to oppoſe itſelf. There are few faults, ſaid I, which a lively penitence cannot obliterate. If you have abandoned a wife or a mother, is this evil irreparable? I apprehend, by the proofs which you have given me of your diſintereſtedneſs, that your tears have a nobler cauſe, than the poverty to which you are reduced; and would to Heaven, that you had no other misfortunes to weep for, with what pleaſure would I repair fortune's injuſtice to you: you ſhould make me ſenſible of the pleaſure of abundance.

Cheva-

Chevalier anſwered my profeſſions by a profound inclination; for I had forced him to ſit down: after which, he ſaid, I have not hitherto engaged myſelf in indiſſoluble bands: it is not the duties of marriage I have betrayed, but thoſe of nature: I have wrung the heart of the moſt reſpectable of mothers: the generoſity with which ſhe has pardoned my ingratitude, makes me feel, with double weight, the horror of my guilt. I hope one day to ſee myſelf at her feet; but the return of tenderneſs, which made her a month ago the ſole object of my deſires, does not prevent me, to the laſt day of my life, from being the moſt unfortunate of men. In a word, madam, my misfortunes are of that nature, as to be finiſhed only with my life; nay, I deſire not to outlive them: but, once again, pardon me, madam, 'tis troubling you too much, about a wretched man, who at preſent looks for no happineſs, but to ſee your vexations at an end, and whoſe future pains will be ſoftened, ſo far as he ſhall be conſcious of having been of ſervice to the maſter-piece of the creation.

Nothing could be more cautious than Chevalier's diſcourſe; but his eyes were leſs upon their guard, and ſome looks eſcaped them, which the unworthy Montalvo firſt taught me to obſerve.

I do not know whether he was ſenſible of them himſelf, but I imagined ſo, from his correcting them from time to time, and from the promptitude with which he changed our diſcourſe. We talked of French authors, I found that he had read all the good ones. At laſt we heard the maſter go out of the ſhop, ſhutting the door after him, and then Chevalier would get me ſome tea; after which, he aſked me, what were my reſolutions for the day following? I have occaſion for reſt to-night, ſaid I, in order to conſult with myſelf. You muſt not appear at Old Windſor to-morrow before ten o'clock, as you are ſuppoſed to have been to London on buſineſs; and before that, I hope to have made ſome determination able to reſtore my quiet. At theſe words I aroſe, and went towards a little cupboard, where he told me he had his books: I ſaw, with pleaſure, among them, many books of devotion, which gave me an opportunity of ſounding him upon the ſubject of religion, in which I found him ſuperiorly inſtructed. I wiſhed him joy. Ah, madam, replied he, with a ſigh, how weak is the ſupport of underſtanding againſt the inclinations of the heart! The little ſenſe I have, only ſerves to aggravate my faults, and the deplorable forgetfulneſs of my principles, during an entire year. Horrid days! that I would efface

the remembrance of, at theexpence of my laſt drop of blood. I dare promiſe you forgiveneſs, on the part of God, ſaid I to him, if to the ſorrows they cauſe you, you have joined the ſuccours which religion offers you in a like caſe: you will find at London eccleſiaſticks of great piety; you are, no doubt, already acquainted with ſome. Yes, madam, replied he, God has not ſo far chaſtiſed me in his anger: the misfortunes conſequent to my fault, are become the remedy; and I found an angel, whoſe charitable hand, has troubled the pool in my favour. This worthy man lives in a neighbouring village, and near him my miſeries never fail to find new conſolation. I have already had it once or twice in my head, to propoſe to you an interview with him. My maſter ſometimes ſees him here, and though he is not ignorant of his profeſſion, ſees him with pleaſure. How great was my ſatisfaction, to find that I could meet with an eccleſiaſtick, in whom I might confide, and from whoſe holy aſſiſtance I might procure comfort. I begged Chevalier to procure me a viſit from him, for I was impatient to be bleſſed with ſuch a companion. The young man quitted me, as ſoon as his maſter returned, and I would not delay giving you an account of our intereſting converſation, which, for a ſhort time, ſuſpended my ſenſe of pain. I dare not aſk

his

his ſtory. He ſeemed to me afraid to tell it me, by twice eluding my curioſity: whatever may be the faults with which he reproaches himſelf, I believe it is rather the effect of error than vice; his heart is made for virtue.

Continuation and Concluſion of CLARISSA'S *Letter to Lady* HARRIET.

CHEVALIER is returned from Windſor, and what dreadful news has he brought me! God give me ſtrength to ſupport the misfortunes I am yet to ſuffer. It is from the landlady of the inn he had the following account. The moment ſhe ſaw him, ſhe cried out, Alas, my dear ſir, if you had arrived a few hours ſooner, you would have been witneſs to a ſcene, which would have melted your heart. The poor girl, whom you ſaw here yeſterday, has been taken up as an accomplice with her miſtreſſes. Two wretches have ſworn, that madam Darby, and her daughter, would have prevailed upon them to poiſon Mr. Darby, becauſe he oppoſed her marriage with the Italian, who paſſed for a marquis, though he was but a vagabond. The ſervants (as they ſay) received the poiſon, leſt it ſhould be offered to others leſs ſcrupulous, and put it yeſterday evening into the hands

of Mr. Darby, who, unwilling that ſuch a thing ſhould take wind, contented himſelf with ſhutting up his wife and daughter, in different places. His daughter eſcaped in the night; and Montalvo, taking advantage of the father's abſence, took off the mother yeſterday morning. What confirms this evidence, is, that madam Darby ſeems to have gone off with the Italian very willingly. For my part, added the woman, I do not know what to ſay; I could have ſworn that the mother and daughter were ſaints; it is true, they are papiſhes, and it is ſome months ſince the father quitted that religion; perhaps they might have done this out of vengeance, and they ſay thoſe papiſhes are capable of any thing. I am ſure I never ſaw any ill by the poor gentlewomen in my life; and I wiſh, from the bottom of my heart, they may get clear. To be certain, they were the beſt neighbours in the world, and the kindeſt to us; when they met me, it was, How do you do dame? how are the children? and ſuch like. And do you believe, ſaid Chevalier, that the maid is guilty? Ever ſince I knew her, ſaid the hoſteſs, ſhe has appeared a very good girl, and I believe ſhe is only ſuſpected; but it is a cruel thing to be in priſon, ſir; it is but a little while ſince they took her away, and ſhe ſeemed to go with great reſolution.

But

But I beg pardon for not aſking you in before; won't you pleaſe to take ſomething? No, ſaid Chevalier, I have a great way to go to-day; but tell me, does Mr. Darby intend to arreſt his wife and daughter? He has got warrants againſt them, ſaid ſhe; but, to tell you the truth, I believe, only with a deſign to frighten them, and make them fly. The daughter is as rich as a Jew, and perhaps the father has a mind for her wealth: but, after all, God is to judge them, and not I. Chevalier had no occaſion to hear more, he returned hither as faſt as his horſe could go; and after having given me this melancholy information, ſet out for a neighbouring village, to bring the prieſt of whom he ſpoke to me yeſterday.

Was there ever ſuch a ſituation as mine? I have no choice between an infamous death for myſelf, and my honoured mother; or to be the means of bringing to the gallows, him to whom I owe my life. O Heavens! Mr. Balfour can, from this moment, afford me but one ſort of aſſiſtance, which I muſt never think of but with horror. Could he grant a protection to a creature, under the moſt infamous accuſation, without juſtifying her to the world? and at what price muſt that juſtification be purchaſed! I muſt

yield with a good grace to the fate that purſues me. My reſolution is taken; you ſhall know what it is, after I have communicated it to the guide I now wait for, whoſe council I will follow, as coming immediately from Heaven.

The fate of yonr friend is fixed, my dear Harriet, for ever; and if I could hope again to be united to my dear mother, I confeſs, without bluſhing, I ſhould think myſelf well recompenced for what I loſe, by what I gain; if he, who generouſly helped me, was born the laſt of men, and I deſtined to a throne, my heart would have choſen, in the moment my reaſon rejected him. I endeavoured to hide from myſelf the impreſſion he has made upon me, which I was going to confeſs to you at the beginning of this letter. To repair that ſhort want of confidence, I will own to you, I loved him from the moment I ſaw him: nor can Heaven be offended at a paſſion, which has ſuſpended the effects of the moſt cruel misfortunes, under which I muſt otherwiſe have periſhed.

But why name paſſion, a ſentiment ſo immediately ſupported by eſteem and gratitude! Can I otherwiſe repay a protector ſo generous? I might attribute my marriage to the neceſſity I am in,

in, to diſarm my father. I might juſtify it by the diſcoveries I have made ſince I reſolved upon it. But I conſider ſuch diſguiſes as unworthy of me, and offenſive to a friend like you. I go then to give you a recital of events, in the order they happened; you may find me culpable, but ſuſpend your judgment.

I mentioned to you, in the beginning of this letter, the diſtaſte I had conceived againſt the fortune which had brought upon me ſuch unhappineſs. When I am reduced to ſell the diamonds which I have in my poſſeſſion, ſaid I, ſhall I not draw from thence a fund ſufficient to paſs in eaſe the reſt of my life? It is true, I deprive myſelf of the hope of entering into an illuſtrious family; but what is there in title or wealth? Do they merit that we ſhould expoſe ourſelves to thoſe evils, which the greater part of marriages made upon ſuch terms, are curſed with? A great fortune is often a misfortune; the love of the inheritance, rather than the poſſeſſor, may engage a diſhoneſt man to feign an affection which he has not, in order to get into his net, the prey he wants to devour. At preſent, as I am poor, and no longer worth deceiving, I may, without fear of wounding decorums, which ought always to be reſpected, marry a man in a middling claſs,

where one generally finds people of better morals, than among thoſe in more exalted ſtations.

Theſe conſiderations ſucceeded the following reflections. There is an order eſtabliſhed by Providence, which we are not permitted to depart from. A girl of my age, cannot, with decency, chuſe a huſband for herſelf. A woman of illuſtrious birth cannot miſ-ally herſelf without ſhocking modes and cuſtoms, which having nothing in them contrary to the law of God, ought to be reſpected in marriage. I not only give myſelf a huſband, but a father to a family, which has a right to expect from me one equal to myſelf. My reaſon was but ſecond, in declaring in favour of my protector; my eyes directed their choice, and I have good reaſon to believe, that they have not deluded me, in the favourable opinion they have given me of him. It is reputation that I am moſt anxious about, and I ſhall loſe it by a match ſo little ſuitable. My father gives out, that a deſire to marry, had wrought upon me to attempt his life; a marriage ſo contrary to prudence, will give weight to that accuſation: but I ſhall be juſtified ſooner or later. God has an eye on the wicked; and if I am forbid to wiſh the chaſtiſement of my father, I am permitted to hope that his accomplices may be

be puniſhed, who will then acquit me for the irregularity I now commit. I deſpiſe the judgment of a blind croud; but what ſhall give me courage to ſupport the contempt of my dear Harriet, and her worthy huſband? Shall I be able to ſurvive it? Nay, does not prudence direct me to wait the arrival of Mr. Balfour? He will fly to my aſſiſtance on the receipt of my firſt letter. Will he not have reaſon to accuſe me of precipitation, ſeemingly occaſioned by a paſſion, the irregular motions of which I had not power to ſuppreſs? If I am under a neceſſity of taking a huſband, would it not be better to receive one from the hands of my friend? My father conſenting to give me up the money I have in the bank of Genoa it will be ſufficient to procure me a match, that my friends and family will have no occaſion to bluſh at. May I not acquire a right to diſpoſe of my fortune, by entering a convent: perhaps becoming a nun, will ſuffice to diſarm my father; at leaſt I ſhould determine on nothing till he has rejected that offer.

On reading the objections which I made to myſelf againſt my marriage, my dear Harriet, may, perhaps, condemn me for acting contrary to them; but theſe objections were not unanſwerable; and here are thoſe which my reaſon

ſuggeſts; or, perhaps, my love. I am not of an age to diſpoſe of my hand, without my father's conſent; but, alas, what hopes have I to obtain it! has he not ſold, many years ſince, the right nature gave him over me? If that right be, as I am convinced it is, unalienable, does not the unworthy uſe for which he reclaims it, for ever bar him from it? Thoſe who ſpring from illuſtrious blood, ought not meanly to ally themſelves: it is a prejudice to which we are bound, and how has that prejudice become ſacred? becauſe we ſuppoſe that high birth tranſmits, as an inheritance, the noble and virtuous ſentiments which firſt produced it; becauſe we have reaſon to hope that a man, who is ſpurred by the great actions of his forefathers, and the good example of his immediate parents, will bluſh to deviate from them. In fine, it is becauſe we ſuppoſe a good education inſeparable from high deſcent. Nobility then has no real merit, but what it derives from a greater capability of virtue. He then that is virtuous, is the true nobleman. With the wiſe, in giving a virtuous ally to my family, I ſave it from the danger of being diſhonoured by the ſon of a peer. If Heaven had prolonged the life of lord Aſaph, would not he have grieved, in ſpite of his ſeverity, for the misfortunes in which he has plunged my incomparable

parable mother? The ſhameful poverty to which vice has brought his ſon-in-law, would be a ſufficient puniſhment for his avarice and ambition. I loved him, whom I am going to make maſter of my fate, before I eſteemed. Is then his gracious figure a crime for which he ought to be puniſhed? His air, the regularity of his features, make a ſmaller part of his beauty, than the gentleneſs, tenderneſs, and evenneſs of his mind; it is that mind which embelliſhes his face. Can you think your Clariſſa ſo weak, that ſhe would not ſoon have been able to recover from a ſurprize of the ſenſes, if the leaſt baſeneſs had diſparaged the object of her attraction? I knew him but little, you will ſay; but circumſtances, critical like mine, for theſe two days paſt, unfold a character at a ſtroke. It is no longer a hundred pounds that my father offers to the perſon who ſhall diſcover me; his deſire to deſtroy me is ſuch, that he goes as far as a thouſand. Can Chevalier expect an equal recompence on my part? This is no piece of artifice to enhance his diſinteredneſs; I myſelf read the advertiſement in the public papers, ſigned with my father's name; I am deſcribed as a parricide, who, by her artifices, had cheated her father, and to that crime would yet add more enormous ones, through fear, leſt the laſt will of a deceived aunt ſhould

be ſet aſide. Chevalier then ſeizing me, a creature proſcribed, and perhaps culpable, who would blame him for delivering up a criminal? and might he not eaſily have covered a deſire to make his fortune, with an apparent zeal for juſtice? He offered to conduct me into France; and that offer alone, is a certain ſign that he had no particular hope, nor can I ſuppoſe he had. Twice interrogated upon his birth, he eluded my queſtions; from whence I ought to conclude that it was baſe. People ſuppoſe they have a right to dignify their poverty by titles, when they have any pretenſions to them; he ſet up for none, therefore he had none; he gave himſelf out for a mean workman; a perſon of that condition, could have no pretenſions to one of mine. He then had no hope of recompence in lieu of thoſe, which he might have ſecured to himſelf by betraying me; and he impoſed upon me a law to repair the wrong which his probity had done him.

O Heavens! new misfortunes are ready to fall upon the miſerable Clariſſa: in the middle of the night ſhe is obliged to fly on foot, to avoid the worſt of fates. Great God! what will become of me?

LET-

LETTER XXI.

CLARISSA TO LADY HARRIET.

On board a veſſel bound for Bourdeaux.

YOU muſt have received a letter from me which makes me tremble when I think of it; but I had not time to inform you of the indiſpenſible neceſſity I was under, to conclude it. Alas, without doubt, I have loſt your eſteem and friendſhip; the one cannot ſurvive the other. If my conjectures are well founded, you will not deign to caſt your eyes on the letter of an unfortunate creature, whom you bluſh to have loved. For God's ſake, dear Harriet, condemn me not before you hear me. You have hitherto regarded me with eyes, which your partiality rendered bad judges. You have eſteemed me too much: fall not, I conjure you, into the other extremity, and deſpiſe: no, my heart reproaches me with nothing which ſhould occaſion ſuch a change.

I haſten to give you a recital of my misfortunes; my juſtification goes hand in hand with ſuch fatal circumſtances as I could neither foreſee nor avoid. I am conſcious but of one fault; that

that fault has had its principle in virtue, and how can I repent of it?

In my laſt, I gave you the reaſons, which determined me, in ſpite of prejudice, to marry my protector; I deſpaired not to make Mr. Balfour ſee the reaſonableneſs of the action, and had reſolved to remain where I was, till he ſhould arrive, ſuppoſing it could not be long till I had the pleaſure of ſeeing him. Could I foreſee that I ſhould have but a few hours to remain in my aſylum? The prieſt I expected. And who is that but Mr. Baker, to whom I confided your laſt letter for the poſt. This eccleſiaſtic, I ſay, being come, went up, as he was accuſtomed to do, into the apartment of Chevalier, who, to leave me at liberty to entertain him, ſtaid in the firſt chamber. I made no ſcruple to truſt him with my afflictions and deſigns; I conjured him not to refuſe me his aſſiſtance—my greateſt inquietude was about my mother. I then put into Mr. Baker's hand a letter, which I wrote to my father, and deſired to know whether he would adviſe me to ſend it.—Here follows a copy.

CLA-

CLARISSA TO MR. DARBY.

OH! ſir, ſhut not your ears againſt the voice of Nature, who cannot fail to call on you, in favour of an unfortunate daughter, unconſcious of a ſingle thought that ought to offend you. Why make her fortune a crime? A fortune ſhe never deſired, nor valued, but as ſhe might ſhare it with you, which ſhe gave up to you with pleaſure, and which ſhe is ſtill willing you ſhould poſſeſs. I know it may ſeem inſolent in me to dictate conditions to him, whom nature has ordered I ſhould be obedient to. But I know of no law at preſent, but love for my mother. The greateſt of misfortunes has hindered her from partaking your tenderneſs. I call Heaven to witneſs, that it is not from her complaints I draw this knowledge, her reſpect for you would never ſuffer her to murmur. Give me that worthy mother, and receive, in exchange, all I poſſeſs. Marriage alone can give me a right to diſpoſe of my inheritance: I am determined to acquire that right by eſpouſing an obſcure man, with whom I will go into a ſtrange country, and live there, if neceſſary, by the labour of my hands. I aſk only a few days to fulfil my promiſes. They ſhall be put in execution, as ſoon

as

as you give your conſent. I will depoſit the inſtrument of my marriage and deed of gift, ſealed up carefully, in the hands of the French ambaſſor, who will deliver them to whoever you ſhall appoint to conduct my mother to his houſe. May Heaven vouchſafe to pour down its bleſſings on you, in proportion to thoſe I beg for myſelf. May Heaven hear the prayers I daily offer to reſtore me the heart of a father, who ſhall ever find from me all the obedience and reſpect, which he has a right to expect from the moſt dutiful of children, provided this obedience can be compatible with that ſhe owes her God.

The unfortunate CLARISSA DARBY.

Mr. Baker approved of my letter, but ſmiled at the paſſage, where I mentioned to my father, that I was determined to marry an obſcure man. I aſked him what this emotion meant, which had not eſcaped my notice. If you mean, replied he, by an obſcure man, one who is deſtitute of the gifts of fortune, your expreſſion is juſt; but if you intended this expreſſion to ſignify a man of mean extraction, it is improper. He who has had the happineſs of being the inſtrument of God, to ſave you, is deſcended from a very antient family; his barony might

have been erected into a marquiſate, under the laſt reign; and had it not been for the moderation and probity of his father, he would have been a rich lord. If he has not declared his birth to you, it is owing to the confuſion of your ſituation, and to a motive more flattering to you. You would have had nothing to fear from the pretenſions of Chevalier, perhaps you would have found yourſelf in more danger from the baron de Laſtic.

You are ſenſible, my dear Harriet, that ſuch a diſcovery was not likely to leſſen the good opinion I entertained of this amiable young man. Mr. Baker undertook the trouble of acquainting him with it, when it ſhould be proper; and he judged it proper to call him to aſſiſt us with his advice, with reſpect to what we ought to do about my mother and Fanny.

I was entirely ignorant of Mrs. Coſby's addreſs, but had hopes of finding it out, by means of a Roman catholic clergyman. Through her we could trace her ſon, and know what was become of my mother. With reſpect to Fanny, there was no doubt of conſoling her, and forcing her to accept a ſum of money: I had fifty guineas in my purſe; I gave them to Mr. Baker, to defray the

the neceſſary expences of my mother's journey. I propoſed to pledge one of my diamonds; but my adviſers remarked, that I ought not to think of it, ſince it was very likely, that my father had diſtributed hand-bills to ſtop them, if offered to ſale. I remained, therefore, with no more than five guineas. Chevalier, whom I ought no more to call ſo but by his name; the baron, I ſay, having made uſe of the reſt, to provide me a very plain dreſs. Mr. Baker promiſed me to ſet out at day-break, and exhorted me to expect ſucceſs from his reſearches.

It was tea-time, the baron went out to procure ſome trifles he wanted, and was ſo long abſent, that his ſtay began to give us uneaſineſs. He ſeemed much diſturbed, when he returned; and behold the cauſe of his inquietude.

Being of a benevolent diſpoſition, Mr. de Laſtic once had an opportunity of doing a piece of ſervice to the daughter of a cuſtom-houſe officer, who was married in this village. This young woman, willing to ſhew her gratitude, had come to give him ſome intelligence of conſequence. Her father, with two of his companions, were juſt coming, advice having been given to the cuſtom-houſe officers, that a great con-

contraband trade was carried on in the villages adjacent to Windſor. They had received an order to make a ſtrict ſearch in all houſes which were not inhabited by perſons of faſhion, and propoſed to ſearch his maſter's houſe firſt; for you know, my dear, all the French hair-dreſſers furniſh the ladies they dreſs, with lace and other French goods. She offered de Laſtic to take his goods, if he had any, home with her, and promiſed him they ſhould remain there in ſafety till the ſearch was over. De Laſtic, after returning her thanks, and aſſuring her he had nothing to fear, made the utmoſt haſte to acquaint us with this overwhelming news, which expedited all my reſolutions.

I muſt reſolve to quit my aſylum, and make my eſcape in the middle of the night, under the protection of the baron. Had not my Harriet told me that the only ſtep a girl ought to take, on ſuch an occaſion, was to make her eſcape with a huſband? But was I ſure, that a man of quality would conſent to ally himſelf with an accuſed girl, who could not give him certain proofs of her innocence? This reflection ſtopped me ſome moments. Forced to offer my hand, ſhould I have the courage to ſupport a refuſal, without dying? Nevertheleſs we muſt determine upon

upon ſomething, the houſe might be inveſted this moment, and what would the world think to find a girl concealed in a man's chamber? Beſides, this notice might be an artifice of my father, who, certain I had not entered London, ſuſpected I was ſomewhere in the environs. The fear of falling into his hands, over-weighed every other conſideration. Sir, ſays I to the baron, if I had leſs opinion of your virtue, I ſhould not heſitate a moment about the ſteps I ſhould take: my misfortune is ſuch, that I cannot juſtify myſelf, but at the expence of a perſon's honour, whom I ought, and whom I ſhall, ever reſpect; nothing remains, therefore, but to deliver myſelf up into his hands, and give him an opportunity to extinguiſh by my blood, the hatred I have had the misfortune to inſpire him with. The moſt cruel torments ſhould never force from me the confeſſion of a crime, the thought of which alone ſtrikes me with horror; but I can keep ſilent; my judges will doubtleſs ſay it is a tacit acknowledgment of the crime of which I am accuſed, I ſhall die ignominious: if I draw not my reſpectable mother into my misfortune, I ſhall bleſs my fate; and what will the opinion the world entertains of my memory ſignify, if the juſt judge, who examines all our actions, declares me innocent? There is but one method

to

to eſcape; I may fly, but cannot do it without an huſband. Conſider, if the ſad condition I am reduced to will permit you to accept this offer, which poſſibly, in other circumſtances, might have been accompanied with ſome advantages which are at preſent wanting, ſince——

I was not permitted to ſay more, de Laſtic was at my feet; and, with a diſorder more eloquent than the moſt ſtudied language, acquainted me, with what rapture he received an offer, which he ſhould have made himſelf a thouſand times if he had dared. Mr. Baker interrupted us. It would, perhaps, ſays he to me, be dangerous to ſtay much longer: leave me only here to ſpeak to the maſter, and expeditiouſly ſet out for my houſe; I will meet you there preſently to complete your union, and procure you immediately a more ſafe retreat.

Happily, I was already dreſſed in the plain cloaths which had been brought me, and had made my ſack into a parcel, which the baron took charge of. The night began to grow dark, we eſcaped through the garden, and took the rout by which I came to this houſe, where I expected to ſee your huſband. What words could expreſs the ſituation of my mind on ſo critical an occaſion!

occaſion! Was this the lot to which I was deſtined! Under what unhappy auſpices was this union formed, which muſt finiſh with my life only! Ah, my dear aunt, exclaimed I, from the happy abodes where your virtues have doubtleſs placed you, look down on your unfortunate Clariſſa, and obtain for her from God ſuccour and protection, equal to the danger to which ſhe is expoſed. Pardon me, my generous protector, I added, I cannot think without horror, that I ſhall ſoon have only the fatal power of making you a partner in my misfortunes and poverty; for, in ſhort, ſir, I have no other means to ſave my mother, than by giving to her huſband the fortune which has drawn on me his hatred; too happy, if, at the price of this ſacrifice, I could regain his heart. How little do you know mine, adorable Clariſſa, replied de Laſtic, if you think the idea of your fortune can cauſe a moment's uneaſineſs, to a man whom you ſnatch from the moſt fatal deſtiny. The firſt moment I ſaw you, I adored you. I dare appeal to yourſelf, with regard to the profound reſpect, which forced me to conceal theſe ſentiments in the bottom of my heart, if the buſineſs had only been to offer to your eyes a train of illuſtrious anceſtors, I might have conceived ſome hopes; but, miſerable ſport of the diſhoneſty of mankind, there remains nothing

thing of all my fortune, but a field cultivated by my labour, and bedewed by the ſweat of my brow. How could I have the temerity, in this ſituation, to lift up my eyes towards the divine Clariſſa? How could I preſume to offer her my humble cottage, who would adorn the palace of a king? It is true, my humble roof is inhabited by virtue; a mother, worthy of a better ſon, practices therein, every day, new virtues. What preſent more precious can I make her, than ſuch a daughter as you? I am going to make her amends with uſury, for the torments with which I have rent her heart! You do not know, madam, how guilty he is whom you deign to accept, and how little he deſerves ſuch an happineſs? Though I am almoſt afraid, that the confeſſion of my ill conduct, will leſſen me in your good opinion, yet I cannot find in my heart to diſſemble my faults. Then——I will hear nothing, replied I, interrupting him; I have already told you, that there can hardly be any crime which ſuch a repentance would not efface. Suffer me to abandon myſelf to the tranſporting thought, of ſeeing our reſpectable mothers forget in our arms, both our faults and the rigours of fortune. A firſt motion makes me regret a fortune which I would have offered you; a ſecond conſoles me for its loſs, becauſe

it teaches me to bleſs the misfortunes, which give me an opportunity of being acquainted with the nobleneſs of your mind. We ſhall live in the mediocrity which nouriſhes virtue, preſerves it, and produces happineſs. I ſhall perpetually remember the circumſtances in which you have accepted my hand; and you will be able to ſay to yourſelf, it is not to theſe circumſtances that I owe Clariſſa. Decency, in another ſituation, would have obliged her to wait the conſent of thoſe on whom ſhe depended, before ſhe declared her ſentiments; but they were ſuch, that if ſhe could not have obtained their conſent in my favour, ſhe would never have married any other perſon. De Laſtic was not able to moderate his joy, on hearing ſo frank an avowal of the ſentiments he had inſpired me with; he threw himſelf at my feet, without conſidering how improper the place was for ſuch tranſports; and, if I had not reminded him that we could not gain an aſylum too ſoon, he would abſolutely have forgot the danger we were in by delaying our eſcape. Mr. Baker had given us the key of a ſmall houſe where he lived alone, and recommended us to wait there for him, without any light; where he very ſoon came to us, though loaded with the baron's goods. My future huſband had acquainted me, in the interim, that he did

did not know how he could ſettle with his maſter, to whom he owed fifteen guineas. His generous friend gave his note for that ſum; and, as the departure of his ſervant might embarraſs him, he gave him fifteen guineas more of my money, which I approved of. He told us afterwards with what pretence he had diſguiſed the baron's flight. He had there two valuable pieces of goods, which had been entruſted to his care, to be ſold, and he had juſt learned that a ſearch was immediately going to be made in your houſe. You need not be in the leaſt uneaſy, he has left nothing that can bring you into trouble, and, in a few days you will hear of him, as ſoon as he has ſecured his truſt in a place of ſafety.

You may imagine with what pleaſure we received the happy turn he had given this affair. He interrupted our thanks, to make a ſhort diſcourſe on the ſacrament he was about to adminiſter to us. I know your diſpoſitions, ſays he, in finiſhing; you are worthy of each other, and I hope I ſhall never have bleſſed a union more agreeable to the Lord: in a time of greater tranquility, I ſhould have required more precautions. You know I run a great riſque in marrying you, and that you would ruin me, if you made uſe of the certificate I ſhall give you.

It is only for madam, your mother, ſays he to the baron, when you get to her, and you cannot diſpenſe with adding ſome ceremonies to your marriage, to render it conformable to the cuſtom of the country in which you are going to live; I ſhall take care to write to your archbiſhop, by means of the apoſtolic vicar, who will certify my being a prieſt, and you will then follow the orders of your prelate.

Mr. Baker went out a moment, to call in two catholics on whom he could depend; and, in their preſence, united me to the moſt worthy and beſt beloved of huſbands. The ceremony was hardly over, before he ſays to us, I do not think you are ſafe here; who knows but this village may be one of thoſe that are to be ſearched? you muſt, therefore, reſolve to depart directly. My mother lives about nine miles hence, in a village far from the main road. I will write a line to her, to deſire her to ſecure you an aſylum, in which I may acquaint you with the turn your affairs take: one of your witneſſes will be your guide. I would, added he, procure you horſes, but I think it will be ſafer for you to go on foot; though it is not likely that Mr. Darby has given a deſcription of you, to the turnpikes on the north road, where you are going; yet the public papers

papers have, no doubt, ſaid enough of your flight to excite curioſity; foot paſſengers eſcape notice more eaſily than perſons on horſeback; beſides, they can travel, without being obliged to go through the turnpikes.

How happy am I, my dear! Our generous friend, Mr. Baker, ſends me a letter, which was given him by the peruke-maker! I remember the hand of my dear Harriet; I kiſs it a thouſand times, and leave every thing to read it.

LETTER XXII.

LADY HARRIET TO CLARISSA.

TO what trials does God put my patience, dear and unfortunate friend! How has your Harriet reſtrained herſelf from ſetting out directly, on receipt of your letter, to reſcue you from your cruel perſecutor! Is this the only token I can give you of that lively ſenſe, with which you have a right to expect that I ſhould feel all your afflictions! If, inſtead of myſelf, you only ſee a letter from me, attribute it to the fear I am under of committing a crime. The recital of your misfortunes has made ſuch an impreſſion upon me, that I feel very ill effects from it: however, the phyſicians are of opinion that the hurt I have received is not incurable, if I conſent to remain eight or ten days in bed; and during that interval, my unfortunate friend—— O Heavens! I cannot ſupport the dreadful apprehenſions that cloud my mind; and if I was not ſure that Mr. Balfour would, on the firſt intelligence, ſet out to give you that aſſiſtance which you ſtand in need of, I doubt whether my feeble virtue would be ſtrong enough to keep me here.

By the greateſt misfortune in the world, Mr. Balfour was at Compeigne when I received the dreadful news of your ſituation; but an expreſs was immediately ſent off. I expect my huſband every moment, and you may be aſſured that he will ſtay at Paris no longer than is neceſſary to read your letter. The poſt-chaiſe is ready, and perhaps you may ſee him before you hear of his departure. Poor Clariſſa, to what extremities have you been reduced! May God ſhower down his bleſſings on that honeſt man who is become your protector: if I was a queen, he ſhould ſoon be a prince: praiſe him, love him, as much as you pleaſe, you cannot love him more than I. My fortune, from this moment, is his: I will not ſay, to diminiſh my ſenſe of gratitude, that he muſt have been a barbarian to have acted by you in any other manner than he has done; yet, how few men, in his circumſtances, would have refuſed ſuch a ſum, in exchange for their probity! But his delicate attention to you, ſhews a ſoul of the nobleſt mould. No, my Clariſſa, that man is not what he appears to be; he confeſſed that he was poor, but has anſwered nothing on the article of his birth; and, be aſſured, it is not obſcure. But, ſuppoſing that my conjectures are wrong in this particular, and he ſprings from an ignoble ſtock, he has ennobled

his race, and has a right to reſpect from all honeſt people. Add not to your misfortunes, my dear, that of tormenting yourſelf, on account of the ſentiments with which he has inſpired you; your extreme delicacy renders you timid; and I know, by that warm intereſt which I take in his affairs, what the moſt grateful of hearts muſt feel for him. I have always had a horror for mean alliances; you know it; but if on any account I could excuſe one, ſurely your preſent ſituation would juſtify it to me. Do not believe that I would encourage that good diſpoſition which you ought to have towards him; all the virtues have their exceſs, which becomes vice. I would only defend you againſt yourſelf; it would be excuſable to be tempted in ſuch a caſe, and I ſhould regard a victory, in that temptation, as an heroic act, of which, perhaps, there is no perſon, but my Clariſſa, capable: but if my ſuppoſitions, with regard to this young man, are well grounded; if he is only indigent; if, as he has told you, he remains in his preſent low profeſſion but to fulfil a duty; if, in ſhort, one could be aſſured, that his birth is equal to yours, I ſay to you ſincerely, my dear friend, do not come alone, bring me your protector, we will verify his nobility, and accompliſh that part of your dream, in joining your hands, without that

monſter

monſter Montalvo's meddling.——I hear my huſband.

He departs, my dear Clariſſa; he departs with this letter: I put it, however, in the poſt; the poſt, perhaps, will make more diligence than he; if he arrives firſt, well and good; if this expreſſion of my friendſhip arrives only an hour before him, my dear friend's tranquility will be an hour in advance.

LETTER XXIII.

CLARISSA TO LADY HARRIET.

MY misfortune is contagious, and catched by thoſe who are moſt dear to me; Heaven grant that the effects may be leſs dreadful than I have reaſon to fear. Mr. Balfour's departure aſſures me, that he thought you out of danger. The warmth of your friendſhip does not ſurprize me, any more than the addreſs with which you give me advice, that I am no longer in a ſtate to follow. We are now weighing anchor; the moment I arrive in France you ſhall hear from me. But why do I not leave the ſhip, and return from whence I came, on being apprized of Mr. Balfour's kindneſs for me? I beg of you to ſuſpend your judgment: I have only time to ſeal my letter. If you condeſcend to anſwer me at Bourdeaux, to be left at the poſt-houſe, I ſhall receive one of the greateſt pleaſures which I am yet capable of enjoying.

LETTER XXIV.

MRS. DARBY TO MISS CLARISSA.

DEAR, amiable and virtuous daughter, you would have found me on your landing, inſtead of this letter, was I not yet in the beginning of an illneſs, which might be of the moſt fatal conſequence, was I not to nurſe it. The ardent deſire I have to ſee myſelf again in your arms, engages me to take care of a life which belongs to you, and every moment of which I would employ, to teſtify my gratitude for the ſacrifices you have made me.

LADY HARRIET *in Continuation.*

THE phyſicians have permitted your mother to write the few lines above, in order to ſatisfy her dear daughter. She is ſnatched from the jaws of death: but reſt aſſured that the danger is over. We have an account of your marriage; we approved it, before we received the letter, in which you conveyed us that agreeable news; and we admire the goodneſs of Providence which has conducted you to happineſs by ways ſo extraordinary. I will not ſcold you till by and by, for your ill conceived fears of

our diſapprobation of your conduct. I will not amuſe you with my babbling, till you know by what happineſs we are in poſſeſſion of your other half; of a woman, to ſay all in a word, worthy of being the mother of Clariſſa.

I told you in what manner I ſent my huſband to your aſſiſtance. In fifteen hours Mr. Balfour was at Calais, and arrived before the poſt: the only ſervant he had with him run to the port, with orders to make a bargain with a captain to ſail the next tide; he was obliged to wait at Calais two hours; and though he had ſcarcely taken any nouriſhment on the road, he was angry at the delay, however neceſſary for himſelf, and his ſervant as much fatigued. The man was but juſt gone off, when his impatience perſuaded him that he loſt a precious time, hoping, by means of an extraordinary recompence, to engage ſome captain to put to ſea half an hour ſooner. He left his chamber to follow his ſervant. Judge of his ſurprize at the ſight of Mrs. Coſby, who, at that moment, entered the inn. What ſhe had done for you, the light ſhe could give with regard to you, and your mother, made him ſalute her by her name. The woman, who had heard from your mother, that you correſponded with us, gave a loud cry as ſoon as he ſpoke

ſpoke and ſhe knew him; and, without making any anſwer, run to the door of a room, which opening, ſhe cried, Mrs. Darby, here is Mr. Balfour. You may eaſily imagine, that my huſband was in the room before your mother could come out of it. His firſt words were, Is miſs Clariſſa with you? Your poor mother burſt into tears, and, falling upon her knees before Mr. Balfour could prevent her, Ah, ſir, ſaid ſhe, I am going to Paris, to demand your protection for my unfortunate daughter; I know not what will become of her, only that the ſearch her father makes after her, aſſures me, that ſhe is not fallen into his hands. Recover yourſelf, madam, ſaid Mr. Balfour, raiſing her up; your charming daughter is in ſafety, and I fly to reſtore her to your arms; I would ſay, to revenge her of her perſecutor, did I not know that her ſcrupulous virtue, content with the firſt ſervice, would not permit the ſecond. But read yourſelf the cruel extremities to which ſhe has been reduced, and her ſentiments with regard to you, and a man, whom I cannot call as he deſerves.

[redacted]

Eager as your mother was to read what might inform her of your ſituation, her tears and ſighs often obliged her to lay down the letters. I

will not repeat to you her expreſſions of grief and tenderneſs; you know her heart is attached to you, and that knowledge will eaſily convince you of her feelings upon this occaſion: thoſe are things which deſcription always enfeebles, becauſe they are beyond expreſſion. She would have informed Mr. Balfour, by what means ſhe eſcaped; but conſidering that every inſtant employed in that narration, would be ſo much time loſt for your deliverance, ſhe contented herſelf with telling him, that ſhe owed her's to the ſincere repentance of Mrs. Coſby and Montalvo. Mr. Balfour, wholly occupied by your mother, had not taken notice of that young man, who, with an air of great humility, ſtood at ſome diſtance in a corner of the room. My huſband reached him his hand, ſaying, It is for man to err, but he muſt be a great man, ſir, who repairs his faults as you have done yours. Any other time I would partake with you the happineſs of conducting Mrs. Darby to my houſe; but miſs Clariſſa's intereſt forces me at preſent to leave it entirely to you; yet pardon me one reflection, are you in ſurety in France? The motives which bring me hither, replied Montalvo, makes me hope to find favour from my ſuperiors; but if I preſume too far, I will willingly ſubmit to whatever chaſtiſement they think proper to inflict,

flict, to puniſh my apoſtacy. Theſe are worthy ſentiments, replied Mr. Balfour; however, let me intreat you to ſuſpend their effects; if Heaven favours my paſſage, I hope to be in thirty hours at ——, it will ſcarce take more time to repaſs the Channel. This little interval will not be unneceſſary to reſt theſe ladies. I beg of you then to wait for me here; we will take the road for Paris all together, and you ſhall ſtay at my houſe till you have made conditions with your ſuperiors. Mrs. Coſby conjured your mother to grant this favour to her ſon, and ſhe conſented with more willingneſs, as, by that means, ſhe hoped to ſee you a day or two ſooner. Mr. Balfour being told, that the veſſel which the ſervant had hired, was then in the port, waiting for the tide, the wind being briſk and fair, he went to it immediately: but his return was not ſo ſpeedy as he hoped. Here is what happened to him.

He never left the poſt-chaiſe which he got into at Dover, till he arrived at ——; and having enquired for the houſe of the perriwig-maker, he got out at a little diſtance from the ſhop, where he enquired for a young man, that worked there, named Chevalier. He has left this houſe ſome days, replied the man; and the

fifteen

fifteen guineas he has ſent me, by no means comforts me for his loſs; no, never ſhall I meet ſuch a brave lad again: ſo ſober, ſo diſtintereſted! O he was a treaſure. Whatever pleaſure my huſband took in hearing thus confirmed the praiſe you beſtowed upon your guide, an intereſt more preſſing obliged him to interrupt it. And why is this excellent young man gone from your houſe? ſaid he. It is a myſtery, replied the perriwig-maker, and I cannot tell you: but you, ſir, appear to be a man of diſtinction; pardon my curioſity, if you are a cuſtom-houſe officer, I can aſſure you that I never knew my young man deal in ſmuggled goods; he had enemies, without doubt, but he never I am ſure deſerved them: indeed he was loved by every body hereabouts, and even thoſe above him, notwithſtanding he was known to be a papiſt. By his myſterious manner, my huſband thought him in the ſecret. I am no revenue officer, ſaid he, but a friend of the perſon who lived with you:-he was a man of quality, and I come to tell him, that his affairs in France are entirely ſettled, and he may return there when he will. My name is Balfour, and you may depend on the truth of what I ſay. Very likely, ſir, replied the other, but as I do not know you, you will excuſe my not ſaying more, eſpecially as I tell you all I know.

know. The young man lived with me, I have nothing but good to ſay of him: if he was a perſon of quality, his air ſpoke as much: farther, I can anſwer for his not owing a penny in the village; he went away, becauſe the roads are free; I did not aſk him where he was going, becauſe I never meddle with other people's affairs. Thus it is impoſſible for me to ſay where he is, though a member of parliament ſhould aſk me, or the king himſelf, becauſe it is impoſſible to tell what one does not know.

At any other time Mr. Balfour would have admired this man's fidelity, but now he could have wiſhed him leſs diſcreet. You drive me to deſpair, ſaid he to the perriwig-maker; I tell you I am juſt arrived from France, the poſt-chaiſe-boy will tell you, aſk him. At that inſtant a young woman, in a genteel riding habit, on horſeback, ſtopped before the ſhop, and aſked if it was not there Mr. Chevalier lived? Why, are you all mad? replied the perriwig-maker: he was here, and he is here no longer; I know nothing of him, go about your buſineſs. You are very rude, ſaid the girl; about a fortnight ago I ſaw him at Old Windſor; he rode, and took me up behind him, his horſe was—Is your name Fanny? ſaid my huſband. Yes, ſir, replied

plied ſhe, but to whom have I the honour to ſpeak? My name is Balfour. The girl inſtantly exclaimed, Ah, ſir, what good fortune brings you here? you certainly have heard of my poor miſtreſs, and what has happened; I thought to find her here, that Mr. Chevalier gave me his direction, and this is the place: ſo ſaying, ſhe drew out of her pocket a ſmall paper, folded up, which ſhe gave to the perriwig-maker. He drew out his ſpectacles, wiped them, fixed them upon his noſe, ſhook his head ſeveral times, to try if they were faſt, becauſe his noſe is like Mr. Leſby's, which has ſo often made us laugh. Mr. Balfour confeſſed to me, that he had more than once an inclination to beat him, but that was not the way to unchain his tongue; they were obliged to work fair and ſoftly, and be angry with patience. The good man turned the note, and returned it three or four times: he then ſaid to himſelf, here is a myſtery which I cannot comprehend; here is one who aſks for a young man that lives here no longer, and another that enquires for her miſtreſs who never was here at all; but, notwithſtanding, here is the writing of poor Chevalier. Then, raiſing his voice, Sir, and young gentlewoman, ſaid he, will you be pleaſed to walk into my ſhop, and be ſo good as to wait here an inſtant: if miſs

will

will be pleaſed to lend me her horſe I ſhall return quicker. It was the only way that was to be taken, and Mr. Balfour made no doubt that he was going with intelligence to the young man, whom, he imagined, had retired to ſome diſtant village. During his abſence, Fanny informed my huſband, that ſhe had found ſecuritics, and that the firſt uſe ſhe made of her liberty, was to come and look for her miſtreſs; ſhe informed him alſo that it was James, and one of the ſervants of Montalvo, who had depoſed againſt Mrs. and Miſs Darby, and who had even put into the hands of a juſtice of peace, the poiſon which was to be the means of their perdition. With regard to Mr. Darby, he did not return to the houſe for eight days, and was much ſurprized to find Old Riding, your guardian, who had ſealed up all your effects, and refuſed him admittance. Fanny had wrote to that honeſt farmer, who loſt not a moment in flying to your aſſiſtance, and found her bail. He was ſtopped at an inn, at the entry of the village, and waited, with impatience, till ſhe had obtained permiſſion for him to ſalute you, and receive your orders. His deſign was to conduct you to London, there to put you under the guardianſhip of my lord chancellor, and indite the two perjured villains who accuſed you and

your

your mother. Have you, added Fanny, heard nothing of my lady's mother? do you believe ſhe is with my miſtreſs? Mr. Balfour then told the poor girl, that Mrs. Darby was in ſafety at Calais, and deſired that ſhe would immediately go to the inn, and bid Old Riding come to him. That worthy creature was extremely comforted by the ſight of my huſband, and promiſed himſelf, from the aſſiſtance of his protection, to have the pleaſure of ſoon ſeeing the two perjurers with their necks in the pillory. But Mr. Balfour much ſurprized him, when he informed him, that you were determined to commit your juſtification to Providence, and that you would rather be condemned as culpable, than permit an attack upon the life of your father. Excellent young lady, excellent young lady, repeated twice the good man; may God bleſs her. I ſtop here, my dear; I make as much haſte to write this letter, as if I was not well aſſured it would be a long time before it could come to your hands; but I would rather it ſhould ſtay at the poſt-houſe, than you wait for it; and when my fingers are a little reſted, I will take up my pen again, and ſend it off the firſt opportunity.

And now, my dear, I begin my narration, where I left off. The perriwigmaker at length arrived,

arrived, and brought with him a very well looking man, who desired Mr. Balfour to go up with him into the chamber, which was over the parlour. As we had not received your second letter, the name of Baker excited no extraordinary emotion in my husband; but when he learned from that worthy creature the obligations you had to him, he embraced him with an ardour, sufficient to convince him of his attachment to you: he was now informed of your second flight with the Baron de Lastic, become your husband. I addressed them to my mother, who lives in a village in the next county, said the good priest; but God, whose designs accord not always with ours, had permitted that she should depart from thence some hours before their arrival, to visit, at sixty miles distance, one of my sisters, who was sick; and, as their letters pressed her to set out on the moment, if she wished to see her alive, what with her hurry and her trouble, she was not able to give me previous notice. The baron did not mention this to me in his letter, I heard it from my mother in the first I received from her; but he told me, his wife was determined to go to ———, where she would find, in the house of a gentleman farmer, her guardian, all the potection she could desire: he told me, that they would not depart till the next day, because

that madam de Laſtic was extremely fatigued; but he promiſed to write to me in a poſt or two. I have heard nothing from them ſince, and having myſelf writ to the farmer to make inquiries, no anſwer is come from him; however, I am more happy with regard to Mrs. Darby, who, I know for a certainty, to have embarked for France, where ſhe muſt, ere this, be ſafely arrived. My huſband confirmed this circumſtance to him, and Mr. Baker, deſiring to know what meaſures he would take with Mr. Darby, my huſband told him, that, was he maſter of the affair, he would undoubtedly proſecute him with the utmoſt rigour, but that you had reſolved againſt any ſtep that would in ought be prejudicial or uneaſy to your father. Let her enjoy the glory of reſignation to the will of Heaven: her reſolution to abandon all to her father, appears to me heroic, and I ſhould think I oppoſed the decrees of God, if I endeavoured to diſſuade her from it. Let us leave her to cultivate in obſcurity and retreat, virtues, which, perhaps, might be loſt in a more brilliant ſituation. Mr. Darby is old; he cannot diſpoſe of the main fund, which muſt, one day, return to Clariſſa and her children: let him then enjoy the revenues for his life. Madam de Laſtic will be better able to ſanctify the uſe of them, when

when ſhe ſhall have ſeen, by a near view, how precious riches may become to thoſe who know how to employ them to the purpoſes which Providence had, when he made them rich.

I only give you an extract of Mr. Baker's long diſcourſe, which might be called a ſermon; and alſo a panegyric, where your praiſes and your huſband's were not forgotten, but I have the diſcretion to paſs them over in ſilence. My Clariſſa loves not incenſe; thongh her head is too ſtrong to be affected by it. Mr. Riding was called, and it was agreed, that my huſband ſhould ſee Mr. Darby, and confirm all your promiſes to him, on condition that he would ceaſe all purſuit, and that he would put into the hands of a juſtice of peace a certificate, in which he ſhould declare his conviction of the innocence of his wife and daughter. This certificate, which ſhould be ſealed in his preſence, and not opened till after his death, ſhould not be delivered but in exchange for a due and proper aſſignment of your fortune to him, for the term of his natural life.

It does not become me to criticize the deciſion of ſuch wiſe people, yet it appears to me a little hard, that the richeſt heireſs in England ſhould

ſhould be reduced to narrow circumſtances, while her immenſe fortune is poſſeſſed by a ——. Hold your tongue, Harriet, you will be ſcolded. My Clariſſa will periſh to kiſs the hand that perſecutes her: this, however, comforts me, by the ſale of your diamonds, you may raiſe a ſum, which, in France, will be a conſiderable fortune; for to tell you that our fortune, ſuch as it is, is yours, would be another thing for which I ſhould be infalliby ſcolded. My huſband was ignorant that Mr. Baker was engaged for fifteen guineas to the honeſt perriwigmaker, but thinking that ſome acknowledgment was due to him, he begged of that worthy clergyman to give him the remainder of the ſum, which you had left in his hands, which was an infinite ſatisfaction to the poor man, without conſoling him for the loſs of his ſervant, whom he declared he would make his heir. They did not think it neceſſary to truſt him with more than he already knew, which was only that Chevalier was a great nobleman; and as they did not tell it to him as a ſecret, he had been every where to tell this good news to all the people in the village, who heartily rejoiced at it. He ordered a very good dinner from the inn, and my huſband, Mr. Baker, the good Riding, and Fanny, dined at his houſe, and obliged him to ſit at table with them.

Imme-

Immediately after dinner, my huſband went to Old Windſor, to ſpeak to Mr. Darby, who at firſt ſeemed diſcouraged at this viſit, which he received at the inn: afterwards, aſſuming his uſual audacity, he endeavoured to perſuade my huſband, that he could ruin you beyond reſource. My huſband did not ſuffer him to finiſh, but, aſſuming a haughtier tone, Thank, ſays he to him, the commands of your excellent daughter, otherwiſe I would have ſacrificed my fortune and life to have done her juſtice, with reſpect to the horrible attempt which has been made againſt her. Your James is not a novice in guilt; he muſt not think that I am ignorant of the ſhare he had in the ſudden death of the dean of Colburn; and if he does not ſeek ſafety by a ſpeedy flight, I will have him put into a place, where he ſhall diſcover more myſteries. This menace rendered your father more tractable; he ſhewed my huſband the letter you had wrote to him, and aſked if you were determined to abide by what you promiſed: he added, with an oath, that he deſired nothing more than to reſtore you your mother; but that he would be buried alive, if he knew where the villain Montalvo had concealed her. His jade of a mother had diſappeared with him, and he wiſhed to God that the devil had taken all three. Only mind

the harm I would do my daughter, ſaid he, by making her marry a handſome young fellow, whom ſhe loved, I am certain of it. Since the flight of this wretch Coſby, I have hardly any doubt, but it was her who cauſed all this confuſion: it is the bigotry of my daughter, which throws us into this dilemma. Why not be of the religion of her country? If ſhe had been a Proteſtant, ſhe would have regarded the vows of this youth as null. I loved her, I would ſettle her——Do you not bluſh to avow it? ſaid my huſband, interrupting him: ought not the uncertainty of his birth to have made you fear inceſt? None but Coſby could have told this circumſtance, ſaid Mr. Darby. I am almoſt certain, that this lad is the ſon of Montalvo, and the treachery he has been guilty of, is a proof of it; but, even if he was my ſon, people like us, ſir, are not ſwayed by ſcruples, which affect common people. Where ſhould we have been, if Adam and Eve had paid a regard to them? Did not they marry their ſons and daughters?

My huſband omitted nothing, to make Mr. Darby aſhamed of the impious ſentiments he ſeemed to take pleaſure in diſplaying: but it was in vain, he turned into ridicule every thing that was ſaid; and my huſband, conſidering that

that ſuch a converſion was a miracle out of the power of man to effect, he left him to the mercy of the Lord, and inſiſted only on his dropping his proſecution againſt Fanny. He diſcharged the bail readily enough; and my huſband was not deceived in thinking, I ſhould ſee with pleaſure, a girl, who had ſhewn ſuch an attachment to you. To this proof of his goodneſs he joined another, which haſtened my recovery; that was, to acquaint me, by a line, that he had reaped all the advantage he expected from his voyage. I did not, at that time, doubt but I ſhould ſee the day that would reſtore my Clariſſa to my arms; and I waited for it with an impatience equal to my tenderneſs for her. He arrived in five days afterwards, having left the ladies in an apartment near mine. I cried out, as ſoon as I ſaw him, Where is Clariſſa? With the baron de Laſtic, her huſband, replied he; her marriage, and departure, preceded, for ſome days, my arrival in England: for want of her, I bring you another lady; Mrs. Darby deſires permiſſion to ſhew you her gratitude, for the friendſhip of which you have given ſuch great proofs to her dear Clariſſa. But, my dear ſon, permit me alſo to beg a favour of you: moderate your tranſports, you know not how far extraordinary emotions may hurt you at preſent.

Yes, my dear, I will be moderate. Betty, quick, my robe; run, fly, Mr. Balfour, deſire her to come in, or I will go myſelf: in fact, if ſhe had not appeared, I believe, I ſhould have forgot that the robe I called for was not put on, and that ſhe would have found me naked on the ſtairs. I ſtretched out my arms to her; ſhe claſped me in her's; and, be it ſaid, without diſpleaſing you, I know not whether I ſhould have received yourſelf more tenderly than her. After a number of unconnected ſentences, I was obliged to be a little quiet, in order to learn what I burnt to know, and I did not give her time to tell me. Would you believe, that, never comprehending that the baron de Laſtic and poor Chevalier had any thing in common together, I interrupted Mr. Balfour, to ſcold him, that he did not bring him with him; yet I had ſome ſuſpicion of his birth, and it is here I ought to make you my confeſſion.

Uſed to underſtand you by half a word, I doubted not, on reading your firſt letter, that the invincible Clariſſa had met her vanquiſher: leſs a philoſopher than my friend, I own, I feared the exceſs of her gratitude: had you given up three parts of your wealth to your protector, I ſhould not have murmured; of all the gifts you could

could beſtow him, there was but that of your hand, which appeared to me exceſſive. I then recalled to mind the expreſſion I had made uſe of, in blaming Clariſſa: if a young woman is unfortunate enough to quit her father's houſe, ſhe ought to fly with no one but her huſband. At that time, I had in my head, the caſe of Clariſſa only; little divining, that, in a few days, your ſituation would be like hers. I had no care to make the exceptions, which I ſhould otherwiſe have ſet againſt that general rule. Was it not natural to fear, that you might dwell too much, according to the letter, on that, which I had written with too little reflection; and think it not an inſufferable vanity in me, to believe, that a judgment like your's, could be biaſſed by ſuggeſtions like mine. The worſt of councils appear good, when they happen to chime with our ſecret inclinations. But what a multitude of uſeleſs words, half a page! employed to tell you, I ſaw you loved Chevalier; and I feared you would claim a right to marry him, from the impertinent ſentence I had unwittingly given in your favour. In fine, I would fain have engaged you, at leaſt, to ſuſpend that reſolution till the arrival of my huſband, ſuppoſing that ſome accident might have retarded his voyage. But think not I diſapprove of what you have

done. Circumſtances were become ſuch, after your firſt letter, that it was impoſſible for you not to endeavour to extricate yourſelf at any hazard. I admire the ingenuity with which you confeſs, that your determination in this reſpect, preceded your knowledge of his real condition. But even there your humility deludes you. How ſhould ſentiments and education, ſuch as had your guide, meet in a man ſprung from nothing? It was impoſſible to be miſtaken, it ſpoke the gentleman at once; but I muſt finiſh a narration interrupted mal a propos.

We had ſcarce enjoyed the poſſeſſion of your mother, than we were in the moſt cruel concern for fear of loſing her; a malignant fever appeared with ſymptoms ſo terrible, that the phyſicians at firſt deſpaired of her recovery. They urged my condition, to prevent my entering her chamber; but I proteſted in ſo poſitive a manner, that the inquietude would make me miſcarry, that they left me to do as I would. You will ſcarcely imagine who, next to myſelf, was the moſt aſſiduous of your mother's nurſes; it was poor Mrs. Coſby. She confeſſed before ſhe went into her chamber, and prepared for her laſt hour. In effect, ſhe catched your mother's diſorder; the ſeventh day took to her bed, and four

days after was carried off. 'Tis dreadful to have lived like that woman, yet I desire no other grace of God, than to die like her. It was impossible to hear her talk of her past irregularities, the favours she had received from her Creator, and the confidence she had in his mercy, without being touched. Heaven has paid your debt, my dear Clarissa: her holy and composed dissolution, was a recompence for the service she had done you. Montalvo was so touched by her last advice to him, that, instead of returning into his antient order, he has retired among the Chartreux, and is now actually commencing noviciate. Your mother is at present ignorant of Mrs. Cosby's death, believing her to be in the country. For myself, I advance in a happy pregnancy, without so much as a head-ach. I am to inform you of the motives which engaged Montalvo to save your mother; but that, with the history of their flight, I will remit to another letter, this already making a volume. I find, by your last, that you have had new difficulties to surmount in your flight. I depend on you for an account of them the first opportunity: let us know particularly in what part your husband's estate lies, and if he cannot obtain permission from his mother to pay us a visit at Paris during my lying-in: you may believe, that if I

was in any other ſituation, I ſhould not attend your coming, but lay hold of the happy occaſion to conduct your mother to your houſe; but, what with Mr. Balfour's law-ſuit, and my diſorder, I ſhall not be able to quit this town for ſix or ſeven months, which will appear to me ſo many ages. Mrs. Darby and my huſband charged me to embrace Monſieur le Baron for them, and I do it without ſcruple; I could do it no better if he was here, for me to render them that ſervice, otherwiſe than in idea; for, upon my honour, I regard him paſſionately; and, notwithſtanding my high idea of my Clariſſa, I firmly believe him worthy of her.

P. S. Attempt not, we conjure you, an exceſs of generoſity for Mr. Darby. He has conſented to yield your money in the bank of Genoa: why will you give it him?

LET-

LETTER XXV.

CLARISSA TO LADY HARRIET.

HOW much am I indebted to you, my dear friend; and how ought I to acknowledge the goodneſs of Providence during the reſt of my life, in guarding you from thoſe dangers which you run in attending her! And you, Mr. Balſour, my generous protector, how ſhall I acknowledge, how ſhall I requite, the conſideration you have had for me! To quit a beloved wife in ſuch circumſtances, and then, to permit her to expoſe herſelf as ſhe has done: it is too much, the multitude of your favours make me ungrateful. With the moſt lively ſentiments of acknowledgment, I find my ſenſe of my obligations infinitely below their value. May God be your recompenſer: it is what I aſk of him, upon my knees, every day I live. I alſo hope that he will repay poor Mrs. Coſby: ſhe entered late to work in the vineyard of the Lord; but that good maſter will pay thoſe, who have begun at the ſixth hour, as much as thoſe who went through the fatigue of the day, provided they have worked with a good will. I will for ever return God thanks for his grace to that poor penitent, who drew me from the precipice

where I was ready to fall. She will obtain for her ſon the grace of perſeverance; and if my feeble prayers can have any efficacy, he will wipe out the ſtains of his youth by a ſincere repentance. That unfortunate young man had naturally good principles; and there was room to hope, that thoſe virtuous ſeeds, which had been choaked up, as it were, by the tares of paſſion, would, in the end, produce good fruit. Would to Heaven that I could purchaſe, at the expence of my life, a like grace for my unfortunate father! Curſed, curſed be they who corrupted his youth, and ſpread in his ſoul the poiſon of irreligion, the ſource of all his faults. But, alas! as Mr. Balfour once obſerved, there needs a miracle in order to obtain it. I would willingly devote myſelf to the moſt extreme poverty: judge with what pleaſure then I would ſacrifice the ſuperfluous. I am determined not to claim any part of my fortune; I would prove to my father the excellence of that religion which he deſpiſes, more by my example than my words. I aſk nothing in return for all I ſacrifice, but his affection, and permiſſion, from time to time, to give him proofs of mine. My huſband approves of my determination: his diſintereſtedneſs is without example; and I may ſafely ſay, that this is not the only virtue, in which

which he ſurpaſſes other men; every day, every hour, I diſcover new perfections in him. With ſuch a partner what can I wiſh for; what can I regret?

As I have been extremely fatigued by the ſea, I am obliged to remain ſome days at Bourdeaux, and I lay hold of this opportunity to finiſh my adventures.

Mr. Baker has already informed you of the accident which prevented our obtaining the aſylum which he offered us at his mother's. We arrived at the village where ſhe lives about five o'clock in the morning, and I was ſo fatigued, that I was obliged to repoſe ſome hours at a bad inn; the good woman, to whom we were addreſſed, being ſo poor, that ſhe had no ſervant; and, by conſequence, had carried with her the key of her little lodging. After having ſlept a ſhort time, it was neceſſary to deliberate on the meaſures proper to be taken: you know I had but little money, and I found myſelf but ill able to go far on foot. My firſt deſign was to get to farmer Riding's, but he lived ſixty miles from the place we then were at; and after having paid our guide, we ſhould not have money enough to hire horſes. The honeſt man who accompanied

us, ſeemed ſenſible of our embarraſsment, and we thought we might venture to open ourſelves to him. I have ſome effects, ſaid my huſband, of conſiderable value, but there are ſtrong reaſons that prevent my ſelling them: are you not acquainted with ſome Jew in the neighbourhood hereabouts, who would advance money on ſome rich toys I have, becauſe I ſhould be unwilling to put them into the hands of a goldſmith? Our guide, after a ſhort conſideration, ſaid, I am ſure Mr. Baker would not own you for his friends, if you were not good people; I will therefore venture to aſſiſt you. There is, about twelve miles from hence, a Jew whom I know: I once lived with him, he is extremely rich, and knows that I would not offer any thing ill come by: give me what you would willingly leave in pledge; I will carry it to him, if you chuſe to truſt me, and you may wait for me here till I come back; but, in my opinion, you had better come there yourſelves; it will not take you much out of the way, and you will ſee how far it is prudent to take what he offers. As the town was not upon the great road, and it advanced us nine miles in that we wiſhed to take, we followed the man's advice. We hired horſes, and ſet out the next day. I had a necklace of pearl, which was valued

lued at fourteen hundred pounds, which we put into the hands of our guide, and he took it to his Jew. He ſaid that ſome people, who were to ſpend the ſummer in the village next to his, finding themſelves in want of money, had truſted him with ſome effects, and deſired five hundred pounds on them for ſix months. The Jew made no difficulty to lend that ſum upon what was worth twice as much; and our guide returned with four hundred pounds in bank bills, and the reſt in gold. My huſband delivered them to me, and I immediately gave five guineas to the honeſt countryman, who paid it me back with a thouſand bleſſings: afterwards we hid our bank bills in the plaites of my robe, where we ſewedthem up; and my huſband took the ſame precaution with our money, which he ſewed in different parts of his cloaths; becauſe, being obliged to take a croſs route, it was neceſſary to guard againſt ill accidents. The reſt of my diamonds were put in the corner of a chaiſe which we hired, and we made one half of our journey, without any accident. Arrived at Stafford, we began to reſpire; a day ſufficed to conduct us to Mr. Riding's, and we thought ourſelves almoſt at the end of our troubles; but I could almoſt ſay the vexations were yet to be endured.

It was on a Saturday, in the evening, that we arrived at Stafford, and I had a great desire to hear mass before I set out the next day. The hostess was very obliging: coming up to my chamber, to offer her services, I invited her to drink a dish of tea with me; and as she seemed sensible of my politeness, I ventured to ask her if there were many catholics about that place? Probably, madam, said she, you are one: and, to-morrow being Sunday, engages you to ask that question. I told her she guessed right, and she embraced me tenderly; then told me there was at Stafford, a certain number of Roman catholics, who entertained a priest; and as they were quiet, harmless people, and in the late rebellion had shewn much fidelity to the government, they left them the free exercise of their religion. She was called into the kitchen; and having wished me a good evening, she left me. It was nine o'clock: they gave us a morsel in our chamber, and I hastened supper, in order to have sufficient time to justify myself to you before I went to bed; when the woman returned, with all the marks of terror imprinted on her countenance. My dear lady, said she, the moment I saw you, I had a secret inclination, which made me wish you well; and nothing

thing would ſhock me more, than your encountering any misfortune in my houſe: but deal ſincerely with me; is there any bad affair?—Had I had an inclination to deny it, the ſudden paleneſs that overſpread my countenance, would have made me declare the truth. Liſten to me, ſaid ſhe, I only deſire to be of ſervice to you, and by no means believe you capable of the crime laid to your charge. When you came out of your carriage, there was a man at the door, who had juſt arrived on horſeback, who examined you with much curioſity. When your coachman came into the kitchen to ſupper, the man was there, and aſked him, if you were not come from the London ſide? Why that queſtion? ſaid the coachman. Becauſe, anſwered the other, I am very much miſtaken, if ſhe is not the young woman who has been advertiſed in the papers ſo lately; ſhe is worth ſtopping, ſaid he; ſhe is accuſed of a deſign to poiſon her father. What's that to me, ſaid the coachman? ſhe pays me well; and all thoſe that pay me well, I take for honeſt people. I am not ſo credulous, replied the other, but we will ſee farther. Now, my dear lady, added the woman, conſider whether you have any thing to fear, and reckon upon my diſcretion. The Baron then took the

word.

word. I will not hide from you, ſaid he to the woman, that a love-match has embroiled my wife with a powerful family; but you have judged like a virtuous and honeſt perſon, that ſhe is incapable of the crime with which that wretch dares accuſe her; I will confeſs, however, that the falling into the hands of her parents, before ſhe was reconciled to them, would throw me into thee deepeſt deſpair. Thus, madam, you will acquire an eternal right to our acknowledgments, if you will aſſiſt us in eſcaping from thoſe, who would poſſibly do us a miſchief. Nay, ſaid the woman, I muſt tell you all the fellow ſaid to my huſband, when he had got a cup in his head: there was a thouſand pounds for him who ſhould ſtop you, and he ſwore he would not loſe the reward, but he would examine you a little cloſer in the morning, and then ſend for a couple of conſtables, who ſhould take you up. 'Tis my advice then that you take advantage of the night, to make your eſcape; and, as my lady is a remarkable figure, I think, it would be better if ſhe diſguiſed her ſex: I have a ſon about her ſize and height, I will provide her with a ſuit of his cloaths, and his great coat; quit the high road, the moon is up, and you may croſs the fields: in keeping always to your left, the way is extremely unfrequented,

frequented, and there is no danger of their ſeeking you there. During all this converſation, your poor friend did nothing but ſhed tears, which made thoſe of our charitable hoſteſs run down her cheeks plentifully. My huſband embraced me, conjuring me to take courage. Providence, ſaid he, declares for us, in inſpiring this good woman with the generous deſign to aſſiſt us; and ſo ſaying, he drew from his finger a pretty ring, which I had given him, of about ten guineas value, which he begged of her to accept, as a ſlight mark of our gratitude. At firſt ſhe made ſome difficulty; I perceived, however, that this little preſent gave her zeal new ardour; ſhe ran for her ſon's cloaths, and dreſſed me in them herſelf. The Baron would have given any thing in the world for a horſe, but it would have expoſed us to more eaſy purſuit. We thanked a thouſand times our kind hoſteſs, who conducted us herſelf out of a back door, and even led us a quarter of a mile over a field; after which ſhe ſhewed us, in the beſt manner ſhe could, paths which would bring us near Flint, in the principality of Wales. The firſt night only, ſaid ſhe, will be painful to you; for, once diſtant from this route about a dozen or fourteen miles, you will, without either danger or difficulty, find a horſe. When the woman left

left us, a thouſand mortifying ideas crowded upon me: Is it then, ſaid I, the grand-daughter of lord Aſaph, the great heireſs, that finds herſelf, in the midſt of the night, expoſed to ſuch adventures! If theſe ſort of thoughts were diſcouraging, thoſe that followed were equally comforting. What gracious protection has Providence afforded me under my misfortunes! What would have become of me, had I fallen into the hands of a diſhoneſt man! He would have been already diſcouraged by the dangers he had run, in endeavouring to ſave me; and, perhaps, the beſt I had to hope from him, would be deſertion in this lonely place, which, poſſibly, his ill conduct might make me conſider as a bleſſing. The baron, my tender huſband, left me not long a prey to thoſe devouring imaginations. How do I ſuffer, my dear Clariſſa, ſaid he, to ſee you reduced to ſuch an extremity! Under misfortunes, attended with circumſtances ſo mortifying, will you have ſufficient ſtrength to ſupport yourſelf under the fatigue you are going to encounter? If you will permit me to eaſe you from time to time, I ſhall feel leſs concern. I am in full ſtrength, you are delicately and lightly made: I can ſpare you a part of the fatigue, by carrying you: a burthen ſo precious, will ſweeten to me the length of the way. This

exceſs

exceſs of tenderneſs ſeemed to inſpire me with new vigour. What do you propoſe to me, my dear? ſaid I. Do you think my ſufferings can be determined by an increaſe of yours? No, if Heaven has decreed that I ſhould periſh, I would rather die of fatigue, than of grief to ſee you ſink under that which I had cauſed. But why preſume ſo ill of my courage or my ſtrength? In more happy times, I ſhould have conſidered the way, which I am now obliged to make on foot, as a walk; I confeſs that my misfortunes have, in ſome ſort, enfeebled me, but the happy conſequences of my misfortunes have given me vigour; my preſent pains have produced all the happineſs of my life, and could I buy it too dearly? The baron, not conſidering where we were, catched me in his arms; when we heard a ſudden noiſe, within a little way of us, which made him put himſelf upon his defence; for I ſhould have told you, that he was provided with a pair of piſtols. The moon ſo gave little light, that we heard the noiſe ſome minutes, before we could percieve by what it was cauſed; ſo that we found ourſelves cloſe upon three men, of a ſufficient bad appearance, before we were aware of it, and who appeared to conceive no better opinion of us. We all remained immoveable, looking at one another from head to foot; when one of the

the men ſaid, in French, to his companions, What have we to fear? they are but two, we ſhall be the ſtrongeſt party. Have you never ſeen a ſcene in Moliere, where two poltroons meet in the night, who affect the courage to frighten one another, while the ſound of their voices betray their mutual cowardice? We, at this time, made an excellent repreſentation of that ſcene; though I ought in juſtice to ſay, that among the actors there was no poltroon but myſelf. Indeed my hair ſtood an end with horror. I at preſent make myſelf merry with an adventure which had like to kill me, after the manner of thoſe old ſailors, who, in their chimney corner, divert their families with the recital of a ſhipwreck from whence they eſcaped, and intereſt in proportion to the danger they had run. The baron, at firſt, doubted the truth of this rencounter. The unhappy, whoſe misfortunes are alike, ought not to be alarmed at each other. You are French priſoners, gentlemen, and ſeek, like us, to recover your loſt liberty. You gueſs right, ſaid one of the three men, who had a voice ſo terrible, that it made me tremble; let us ſit down, and try if we cannot help one another in our deſign. As I had walked for ſome hours, and began to be tired, I accepted the propoſition. The men informed us directly

directly who they were: one was the captain of a veſſel, the other a lieutenant, and the other a ſurgeon. I was comforted at this, thinking that ſome education might be expected from people of their rank. The captain told us, that they had come from the caſtle of ——; that they had already travelled four and twenty miles with a guide, who had left them at the beginning of the night, becauſe their money had failed: that their firſt deſign was to go to Briſtol, where the ſurgeon had a friend that promiſed to favour his eſcape; that the want of money reduced them to deſpair, with the loſs of their guide; as for nouriſhment, added he, the fields are full of turnips and other roots, which would prevent our dying of hunger; a very happy circumſtance, as we ſpeak the language ill, ſo that we dare not aſk any perſon the way: there is alſo half a guinea promiſed for every French priſoner, who is apprehended making his eſcape; and the hopes of ſuch a recompence would make us meet as many enemies as we met country fellows. I have a remedy for theſe inconveniencies, replied the baron; and my little companion, having learned Engliſh when he was very young, ſpeaks it as perfectly as if he was born in this country: but he is of a delicate complexion, ſo that I deſpair of ſeeing him come to the end of our journey, otherwiſe

we

we ſhould be happy in your company, and glad to aſſiſt you with any thing in our power. If that is all that embarraſſes you, replied the captain, make yourſelf eaſy: we are four; a few branches of trees will ſoon make us a machine, and when he can walk no further, we will carry the boy upon it; for that matter, I could carry him myſelf on my ſhoulders, like a lamb: I only deſire for a recompence, that he will uſe his tongue now and then to aſk the road. If they do not deceive us, three nights will bring us to Briſtol. During the day time, we will hide ourſelves in the woods, or under the hedges, as we have hitherto done. Our young maſter here ſhall go into Briſtol alone, and you may be aſſured, that the next day we ſhall have a ſhip, ready to carry us where we deſire. The offer of money you make us, my dear countryman, I accept, while we are on our way; but it ſhall only be a loan; for, thank Heaven, we are not quite without means: and, as ſoon as it is day, I will ſhew you a letter of credit upon the Briſtol merchant whom I have mentioned to you. Let us walk on till then, the ſtars will be our guides. In drawing towards the ſouth eaſt, we advance towards the ſea, which is the term of our courſe. What do you think of it? my dear, ſaid the baron to me. Does this plan appear to

you

you reaſonable? In truth, I did not know what to anſwer. The ſurgeon obſerving me heſitate, ſaid very politely, if the gentleman finds any difficulty, he is free to continue his journey alone. We do not pretend to incommode him; we only deſire to borrow a couple of guineas, for which we will give you an order to be paid in France; and theſe I do not aſk, gentlemen, but becauſe you were generous enough to offer it; and ſhould you have changed your mind, and now refuſe to lend it us, we ſhall quit you, without taking the leaſt offence. Sir, ſaid I, you greatly miſtake me. Then, turning towards my huſband, I deſired him to follow the gentlemen; they appear to me honeſt people, let us truſt ourſelves with them, under the conduct of Providence. Saying theſe words, I roſe; and the captain and lieutenant, willing to ſhew me that they were inclined to keep their words, croſſing their hands, and grappling together, made me ſit down upon them; in which manner they carried me above a mile, without appearing the leaſt fatigued. This greatly refreſhed me, and, as if I had acquired new force from the courage of my companions, I walked briſkly till day-break, which diſcovered to us a village upon our right. They propoſed that I ſhould go there to aſk the road, and my huſband would follow me. In this caſe,

I eaſily comprehended, that he would not be left the maſter. Fugitives are always diffident, they would have a hoſtage for my return. I was obliged then to have reſolution to attempt the adventure alone; and the perſuaſion I was in, that I ſhould riſque nothing from diſcovery, in a place ſo diſtant, and under ſuch a diſguiſe, animated my courage, and I laughed at thoſe fears which I had felt till that moment. My cloaths were tolerably decent, and they might take me for a boy of the better ſort, who had run away from his friends. This was the worſt they could think of me. My companions hid themſelves in a field of furze, and in order to make themſelves eaſily found by me again, they ſet up, near their hiding-place, a long ſtick, which had ſerved one of them for a cane. It being harveſt time, almoſt all the inhabitants had left the village. I went into a well-looking farm-houſe, where an old man ſat before the kitchen door, in order to receive the firſt rays of the ſun: a girl was employed, at ſome diſtance from him, in feeding the poultry. God bleſs you father, ſaid I: God bleſs you, daughter, replied the old man. At theſe words, which made me tremble, the ſervant-wench burſt into a loud fit of laughter. You are very knowing, cried ſhe to the old man, if all the girls reſemble this youth,

there would be a crowd of them indeed. Youth or maid, ſaid the old man, my bleſſing is not loſt, I am ſure it was the voice of a girl: is there any thing for your ſervice, my child? My deſign is for Briſtol, replied I; but I loſt my way, and have walked all night; could you not give me, on paying for it, a morſel to eat? Yes, ſaid the old man, and a ſup to drink too. If you are able to pay for it, ſo much the better; if you cannot, God will pay for you. He will not fail to pay you, ſaid I, though you take my money; I have more than is neceſſary for my journey, and your good will, which he knows, will not go without a recompence. Heaven bleſs thee, my child, ſaid the old man; Molly, give him a cup of ale: I never touch ſtrong liquor, ſaid I; but I will willingly take a couple of eggs, and a little milk. I love eggs exceedingly; and if this girl will boil me a dozen hard, I will very willingly charge myſelf with them. Molly made haſte to do what I deſired her; and during that time, the old man ſpoke to me as follows: You have undertaken a long journey, my child; do you know that it is one hundred and forty miles to Briſtol? Can you go ſuch a long way on foot? If I find a horſe to buy, which is not too dear, I will purchaſe it, I could ſell it again when I got to Briſtol, for I only go there, in order to embark for Holland. Why,

ſaid the old man, if you would accommodate yourſelf with a bad horſe, which we will ſell you very cheap; I ſay it is bad, becauſe it is blind, but otherwiſe it goes firm, and will not tire its rider. As I appeared willing to make the bargain, they immediately brought the horſe, which indeed had but an indifferent appearance. They aſked three guineas, and I gave it, in order to give a colour of truth to my apppearance; and they threw into the bargain, a pair of horſemen's bags, with two loaves of bread, a dozen of hard eggs, a piece of ſalt beef and ſome cheeſe: I could have wiſhed for ſome beer, but I had ſaid that I never drank any, and happily I was enabled to make a proviſion of it, before I left the village.

Thus my firſt trial was happy; it encouraged me, and I rejoined my companions, who began to be uneaſy at my ſtay. For my huſband, he was more dead than alive, and reproached himſelf for having let me go alone, as the greateſt crime, though the village was not diſtant above half a mile. After having diſtributed my proviſions, the baron ſaid to the priſoners, that he would rather deprive himſelf of their company, than be ſubjected a ſecond time to the inquietude he had juſt now ſuffered. This young man, ſaid he, has been truſted to my care by

his parents; and I cannot again conſent to ſuffer him out of my ſight. I thought I remarked in the eyes of the ſurgeon ſome looks which ſpoke incredulity: this made me bluſh prodigiouſly, and I reſolved with myſelf that we would get away from theſe people as ſoon as they were aſleep; a refreſhment which they ſeemed to have great occaſion for; but an unexpected accident prevented us, for I ſeemed deſtined to prove in this fatal voyage all manner of ſufferings: on a ſudden my huſband changed colour, and immediately after fell in a ſwoon. Imagine, if poſſible, the ſhocking ideas that aſſailed me at this critical moment; my huſband was become dearer to me than my life; I could not attribute his accident to any thing but the uneaſineſs I had cauſed him. What will become of me if Heaven in its anger takes him from me? Indeed, it was a ſtroke more violent than I thought myſelf capable of ſupporting; the humanity of our companions ſurpaſſed what I could have expected from people of their profeſſion, for the ſea is apt to render the heart a little hard; but the ſurgeon, in particular, endeavoured to bring him to himſelf, with a zeal which I never ſhall forget. I had about me a chryſtal bottle, which you made a preſent of to me on your marriage, the chain of which you know was of

diamond. This toy was ſufficient to diſcover us; but I never conſidered that, for I was quite beſide myſelf; I immediately put it into the hands of Monſieur Dulac, the name the ſurgeon had taken, who, after rubbing the baron's temples and noſtrils, made him ſwallow a certain tincture he carried in his pocket, which quickly brought about the deſired effect; a black bile, which the remedy forced him to throw up, gave him great eaſe; and Dulac aſſured me, that if he had not been aſſiſted in time, he would have riſked an appoplexy. Good God! In what a ſituation ſhould I have found myſelf had this accident happened two hours later, and in a place where I was only with him; but, as I ſaid, the abundant evacuation put him out of danger; though, as you may imagine, it left him extremely weak. The captain and lieutenant now began to ſnore like men, who, after a long journey and a ſevere faſt, had eaten a good meal: Dulac was well inclined to follow their example; but his deſire to tell me what he had in his head, was ſtronger than his love of reſt. It is difficult, ſaid he to us, to impoſe upon men of my profeſſion; the delicacy of this lady's features immediately diſcovered to me her ſex; and the rich ſmelling bottle ſhe juſt now gave me, tells me her condition: your mutual inquietudes, the love you have

have for one another, and the modeſty which ſhines in her countenance, aſſures me that you are a married couple, or likely to become ſo. Be not alarmed, ſaid he, I am not the only perſon who may make theſe remarks; but certainly, no perſon can make them with leſs danger for you than I and my companions: two years in priſon, have given me ſufficient time to know them; and I leave you to judge of their probity, from the motives of their preſent eſcape. This captain and lieutenant were taken before the declaration of war, as well as myſelf; ſo that we do not think ourſelves priſoners according to martial-law; however, we ſhould not attempt to eſcape, had we not been aſſured that the enemy would force us aboard veſſels deſtined for the attack of Quebec. Theſe two men knew perfectly the river St. Lawrence, and would riſk being hung at the maſt-head, rather than not endeavour to ſink the ſhips they ſhould conduct there; and what honeſt man would not rather be torn alive than introduce a foe into his country? Now, when one is capable of ſacrificing one's life to one's duty, one cannot be ſuſpected of a deſign to diſtreſs the unfortunate. Follow then the advice which I give you; diſcover yourſelf to my companions; I aſſure you, you have nothing to apprehend from them,

and your confidence will excite their zeal: I know the captain; he is a man fertile in expedients, and he told me, not an hour ago, that he would anſwer to make you go all over England at your eaſe, and without danger, if you would ſacrifice the ſum of twenty guineas.

We were at the diſcretion of theſe men; they ſeemed full of ſentiments of honour, and really were ſo. My huſband read in my looks my thoughts upon this occaſion; and he anſwered the ſurgeon, by drawing from his boſom a little pocket-book, in which was the certificate of our marriage; the reading of which, inſtructing Dulac of our birth, redoubled his reſpect, and he aſſured us we were not only ſafe among them, but that he could anſwer for his comrades, as well as himſelf, who would riſk their lives in our ſervice, if it was neceſſary. After theſe proteſtations, we gave way to that ſleep of which we had ſo much need; and it is aſtoniſhing, that, in the ſituation we were, it laſted for near nine hours. My dear, that is to ſay, we went to ſleep about eight o'clock in the morning, and it was five in the evening when we awoke; but, no doubt, Heaven afforded us this refreſhment, to prevent our ſinking under the laſt trial which it would make us undergo. My huſband

had

had no other complaint than a weakneſs, cauſed by want of nouriſhment. During our repaſt, the captain, to whom they had declared my ſex, ſaid to us, I conjecture from what the old man told this lady, that we can eaſily get to Shrewſbury this night; after which ſhe can eaſily, ſpeaking Engliſh, procure for each of us a decent coat, our preſent dreſs ſerving only to make us remarkable, and ſubject us to an arreſt: ſhe may then boldly hire a chaiſe for herſelf and her huſband: we will take horſes, and follow as perſons in their ſuite, and nobody will take us for what we really are; however, for the greater ſecurity, we muſt be careful to ſtop at ſuch places as lie a little out of the way. In this manner, I make no doubt, I ſhall be able to arrive at Briſtol in ſafety, and ſhall not ſcruple to go in perſon to the merchant's houſe to whom I am directed.

Notwithſtanding what the captain ſaid, the project appeared to me very hazardous, nor had we at that time an opportunity of putting it in execution, as you will hear preſently; however it ſucceeded with us in part. When we came to the neceſſity of attempting it, we waited for the night with great impatience, to put ourſelves again in motion; and as I feared that the baron might again be ſeized with his illneſs, I pre-

tended that I muſt have ſomebody to ride before me on the horſe, to oblige him to mount. We were all ſurprized at the poor creature's vigour, who carried us admirably; happily we met one of thoſe troughs, which are often in the road, where the poor beaſt began to quench his thirſt. This trough was at the door of a public houſe, and a ſervant wench hearing a horſe drink, it, aſked if we would not alight. I anſwered, "No," but begged her to fill me a bottle with ſtrong beer, and to give a little oats to my horſe. Our companions, on the opening of the door, advanced a little, and waited for us at the end of the village, with much deſpondence; they confeſſed to us afterwards, that they thought we had laid hold of that opportunity to quit their company, but never ſuſpected that we would betray them.

You will, perhaps, be ſurprized, that we ſhould continue to aſſociate ourſelves with the priſoners, whom we could have left, only giving them a little money: but our reaſon was this; the captain was provided with a paſs-port; a thing, without which, in time of war, nobody can embark in any of the ports. In ſpite of my diſguiſe, Mr. Darby had deſcribed me ſo ſtrongly, that I never ſhould have dared to preſent myſelf

to

to thoſe, who had commiſſion to deliver them; and my huſband ſpoke bad Engliſh, which might have occaſioned his being ſtopped as a deſerter. Thus we were priſoners in England, without hopes of eſcaping, otherwiſe than by means of the captain. We aſked the perſon, who gave the oats to the horſe, how far it was from thence to Shrewſbury. Judge of my mortification when he anſwered ſeventy-five miles. I expected to arrive there the day after to-morrow, ſays I to him. You muſt travel a good pace then, replied the boy; and your horſe does not ſeem very ſtrong: nevertheleſs, as the weather is fine, if you get forward to-day a few miles, you may lie to-morrow night at Bridgnorth, which is about ſixteen miles off. I payed the lad; and our horſe, which had recovered ſtrength, ſet out ſuch a pace as ſurpriſed the ſervant. Our companions began to be tired with waiting for us, and were charmed to ſee us return. The ſtrong beer which I brought, had the ſame effect on them, as the oats on the horſe; and they walked ſo ſtoutly, that the ſurgeon, who had a wonderful ſagacity in gueſſing at the vicenity of towns by his ſmell, aſſured us we were near Bridgnorth. It was ſcarcely day-break, which we took the advantage of, to turn out of the main road, and con-

cealed ourſelves in a thicket, which was at a ſmall diſtance. We ſettled ourſelves there as well as we could; but had hardly been there above a quarter of an hour, before a courſing dog, which belonged to ſome ſportſmen, kept barking round us. He at length diſcovered us, and then retired with precipitation. The huntſmen being come up cloſe to us, our captain roſe up, and deſired them, in his bad Engliſh, not to injure perſons, who had never done them harm. As they were only two, and we were five in number, they feigned pity, and repeated ſeveral times, "Poor men!" They then left us, but not long; and, while we were deliberating what to do, returned with a dozen country fellows, armed with ſcythes and pitchforks, who threatened to kill the firſt that offered to ſtir. The baron's firſt motion was to throw himſelf on his piſtols: his ſecond to put them in his pockets, for fear of bringing ſome accident on me. The countrymen ſeized us, and conducted us to the town, where we were carried before a juſtice of peace. He interrogated us very politely in his bed-chamber, for he was not yet ſtirring, which gave me an opportunity of concealing myſelf from his notice. Do not aſk me all that paſſed in ſuch a long conuerſation; I was ſo abaſhed, ſo frightened, and ſo humbled, to find myſelf

in

in ſuch circumſtances, that I was incapable of paying the leaſt attention to any thing. We were all ſent to the town dungeon; and, that this word may not fright you, my dear, what is called by this name in England, has no connection with what that word ſignifies in France. Imagine a little room about ten foot ſquare, or rather a box, for it was wainſcoted all round, and entirely unfurniſhed. We begged for a little clean ſtraw; and, as we offered to pay for it, the gaoler brought it immediately, and obligingly offered us whatever we ſhould have occaſion for. I ſtretched myſelf on the ſtraw more dead than alive; and my huſband, mixing his tears with mine, plainly ſhewed me how ill an end he expected our adventure would have. Certain of my innocence, he was not leſs ſo of my unſhaken reſolution to periſh rather than accuſe my father. It was to be feared we ſhould be conducted to London; and how could we eſcape the ſight of ſuch an infinite number of inquiſitive perſons! If our names were aſked, on board what veſſel we were taken, what anſwer muſt we make? I was within a few moments of being known; and what would have been thought of my marriage, flight, and being found in company with deſerters? indeed, I wonder I did not loſe my ſenſes on this occaſion. My com-

panions in misfortune endeavoured to conſole me, and the captain, hurried away through cuſtom, ſwore heartily, he would periſh, or find a means to reſtore me my liberty. Can you perform miracles, replied I, and is it poſſible without, to eſcape from this place, which has but one window, and that ſecured with iron bars; and, beſides, not wider than half a foot? But, ſays he, I do not pretend you ſhall make your eſcape through this window. Indeed, I muſt brave greater dangers to eſcape from this place of confinement: however, only give me till after dinner, and look upon me as the greateſt rogue in the world, if we do not make our eſcapes before they receive any orders from the admiralty about us. The confidence with which Dulac and the lieutenant received theſe promiſes, was not capable of inſpiring me with any; and if I appeared more tranquil, it was becauſe I conſidered myſelf as in the hands of him who always diſpoſes of the fate of his creatures with wiſdom and goodneſs. My huſband, to whom I communicated this reflection, eagerly embraced it; and, in proportion as it took poſſeſſion of our minds, our reſignation encreaſed, and diſpoſed us to wait, without murmuring, what God ſhould ordain concerning our fate.

In about two hours, our gaoler returned to enquire, whether we choſe to dine? We want air more than victuals, ſays the captain: if you will be ſo kind as to ſuffer us to dine in the yard, we will pay you for our dinner, and ſhall be obliged to you for your company. What are you willing to give? replies the gaoler. A ſhilling a head, excluſive of our drink, anſwers he. You ſeem very honeſt people, returns the gaoler, and I am a good-natured man; make yourſelves eaſy about half an hour, and you ſhall hear from me again. He did not exactly keep his word, in point of time, but, in about an hour, let us into the priſon yard; which was large, and paved with great ſtones; where we found a table ſet out with ſeven plates: for the gaoler had a very ugly daughter. An indifferent dinner was ſerved up, which our companions eat with as good an appetite, and as much chearfulneſs, as if they had been at home. They had ſaid, I did not underſtand a word of Engliſh; and thus, I was diſpenſed with from joining in the converſation which paſt. I eat, notwithſtanding, out of complaiſance to my huſband; and, if I had not been overwhelmed with affliction, I ſhould not have been able to have kept a ſe-

rious countenance, to hear the encomiums they beſtowed on the gaoler's daughter. Dulac had the impudence to tell her ſhe was very pretty; and I was afraid ſhe would have ſcratched his eyes out, the irony was ſo ſtrong: but what was my ſurpriſe, to ſee the poor creature ſwallow greedily all his flattery! What poor wretches we are! How open to the moſt abſurd adulation! In ſuch caſes we are ſo credulous, that there is no merit in deceiving us. Excuſe this reflection, it ocurred of courſe.

While Dulac cajoled the girl, and the lieutenant made the father drunk, the captain examined every part nicely; which circumſtance did not eſcape me. The walls of the yard were not very high, and if the gaoler would have ſuffered ns to paſs the night in the yard, I ſhould not have deſpaired of being able to get over them; but this was a favour not to be expected. Towards the end of our meal, the gaoler told us we were at liberty to diſpoſe of our horſe. We muſt drink him, replies the captain; our hoſt will ſoon find an opportunity to get rid of him; for, blind as he is, he is worth his weight in gold. Stay a little, ſays Dulac, I had rather drink nothing but water, and buy a good

a good horſeman's coat. I am aſhamed to appear in ſuch a ragged condition, before ſuch a charming young lady. Miſs ſmiled, and undertook to procure him one. We were forced to re-enter our box: and the captain ordered a ſucking pig for ſupper, and a pudding to pleaſe miſs. We were hardly ſhut in, before the captain jumped with joy; or, rather, made a motion towards it, for his head touched the ceiling. Make yourſelf eaſy, fair lady, ſays he to me, the devil ſhall be very cunning if we are here three days longer. To work my friends. At the ſame time, they drew their knives; and, in truth, I could not conceive what they meant to do. Having removed the ſtraw, they ſoon broke up a board of the floor; and digging up the earth with their knives, removed it in their hats to the other ſide, and artfully laid it under the ſtraw. I then began to comprehend a part of their deſign, without imagining it was poſſible to execute it. My huſband and I, nevertheleſs, would partake of the labour; and before night, they had made an hole four feet deep at leaſt, and three feet in length on that ſide next the yard. A large piece of timber, which they at laſt found in their way, almoſt diſtracted them, becauſe it directly croſt the paſſage they were opening, and prevented

vented all poſſibility of eſcaping that way. But of what are not minds capable animated with the deſire of recovering their liberty! They undertook to ſaw this beam through with their wretched knives; and as it drew towards night, they dexterouſly replaced the board they had wrenched from the floor; ſo that nothing but the earth, which was concealed under the ſtraw, could diſcover us. As ſoon as it was quite dark, we were releaſed from our confinement, and were introduced into the gaoler's houſe. I admired the confidence of this man, who had only a maid-ſervant and his daughter in the houſe, yet truſted himſelf in the power of five men, who might have uſed him ill. It muſt be acknowledged, the Engliſh are not diſtruſtful, and do not ſuſpect in others thoſe crimes they are incapable of committing themſelves: another reflection, which eſcapes me, in favour of my companions.

While ſupper was getting ready, Dulac puſhed on his affair with the daughter, and gave her to underſtand, that he had an eſtate in his own country; but, that he hardly wiſhed ever to ſee it again, ſince he had the happineſs of knowing her. I had one of thoſe little hoop-rings, which coſt about thirty ſhillings, and which

which he begged of me, to make a preſent to his ſweetheart. As he had no doubt of gaining her confidence, I made no ſcruple of giving it him: I put it in my purſe, which was crimſon and gold, along with twenty guineas. You ſee us cloathed like beggars, ſays Dulac to her: this was an artifice to conceal our flight; but, ſince we are ſtopped, we could wiſh to be dreſt better: for, to tell you the truth, our cloaths are full of a certain animal I ſhould be ſorry to mention. The girl having aſſured him there was no difficulty in procuring us cloaths; Dulac pulled out his purſe, and gave her a little liſt of what he wanted; among which, he did not forget ſome boots. I expect, ſays he, we ſhall ſoon travel towards London; and, as we are in circumſtances to procure us horſes, it would be diſagreeable to ride without boots. He gave her twelve guineas, and, at the ſame time, begged her acceptance of the ring; pretending to be aſhamed to offer her ſo trifling a preſent. She made ſome excuſes, but at laſt accepted it; and ſhowing it to her father, told him, ſhe ſaw by our behaviour that we were gentlefolks; and added, that Dulac had a purſe full of gold; and ſhe thought ſo, becauſe the bottom of the purſe was filled with ſhillings, wrapped in bits of paper, to prevent their mixing among the gold.

The

The girl publiſhed our riches all over the town the next morning; and we had ſeveral viſits through our little window. Dulac entertained the laſſes who came there, and told them, if the gaoler would give us leave, and they could procure him a violin, he would treat them with a dance in the priſon-yard. I heard the girls ſay, the French are very polite, and it is a great pity we are at war with them. Several of them preſſed the gaoler ſo much, that he promiſed to let them have a dance in the evening; and this good man thought us ſo well ſettled with him, that he would have ſworn not to have left Dulac a ſingle guinea, therefore had not the leaſt ſuſpicion of our deſire to eſcape out of his clutches. During theſe converſations through the bars of the window, the work went forward; and to gain time to finiſh it, we pretended to be ſleepy after dinner. Our companions had given their rags to the ſervant, and had dreſt themſelves in their new cloaths, not forgetting their boots. How many vows did I make to Heaven for the ſucceſs of our deſign in the interval! We are very devout on ſuch occaſions, I aſſure you; and at preſent, now I have reached the port, I can recollect the burleſque prayers of our ſeamen without laughing: theſe people are ſo accuſtomed to ſwear, that they interlard their prayers with

with oaths. At laſt, after having been well ſweated, and having well curſed the hardneſs of this piece of timber, and having heartily prayed to God to aſſiſt them in their work, they gained the better of it, and began to undermine gently the pavement of the yard. I was directed to feign myſelf ſick after ſupper; and I did not pretend ſickneſs; the approach of the time of the execution of our deſign, and the uncertainty of the conſequences, threw me into a real fever. They drank hard, to have an opportunity of retiring the earlier, and the gaoler, his daughter, and maid, were a good deal diſguiſed in liquor, when they roſe from table. They had, however, ſenſe enough left, to lock us up cloſely, and my rats, enough to get to work again. The hole being finiſhed, and the clock having ſtruck twelve, our buſineſs was to exert all our ſtrength to lift up the ſtone which cloſed our tomb; I, ſay, improperly, our ſtrength; for they entertained ſo indifferent an opinion of mine, that they did not think it worthy of trial. After a number of ineffectual attempts, the captain gained the victory, and kept the ſtone lifted up with his back, till Dulac had ſqueezed himſelf through the opening, and ſupported it with a piece of wood: for they were afraid the noiſe it would make, if thrown down, ſhould betray us. Beſides,

ſides, they were deſirous of leaving it in its place, in order to give us time to get at ſome diſtance. Dulac had invented another ſtratagem; the ſucceſs of which I am ignorant of. He had wrote a letter in bad Engliſh, and had laid it near the door of the dungeon. In this letter, he proteſted to his fair one, that the deſire alone of being in a condition to aſk her of her father had obliged him to deceive her; that he hoped this conſideration would induce her to conceal our eſcape, at leaſt for two days, to give us time to reach Ipſwich, where a packet-boat waited for us; and gave her to underſtand, he was of a much higher rank than he appeared to be; and that, in return for the favour he begged, he would make her a great lady.

During dinner, the captain had taken notice of a ladder that was ſet againſt an apple-tree, at the further end of the yard; he acquainted us of it, and told my huſband, that it was cuſtomary in priſons for him who paid for the hole, to paſs through it firſt; and that, therefore, he offered us the ladder firſt. This was not a time for politeneſs. Having placed it firmly againſt the wall, the baron held it faſt for me to climb, and was almoſt as ſoon as myſelf on the top of the wall; and my companions, by the help of their

their hands and feet, were quickly there too; and having jumped down on the other ſide, I ſat on the wall, and ſlid down into the captain's arms very luckily. There were three or four gardens encloſed with hedges, to clear, which we eaſily did, at the expence of ſome ſcratches. You gueſs, perhaps, we directly took the road to Briſtol: our captain was too experienced to commit ſuch a miſtake. We had paſſed in ſight of a fine town in the middle of the night which proved ſo fatal to us; he directed our courſe towards that part of the country; for people could hardly imagine we would return back the ſame way. We had nine miles to get there; and, as we intended to enter the town by day-light, we did not hurry ourſelves. The captain and the two new horſemen's coats went firſt, and my huſband and I followed as their ſervants. When we arrived at the inn, I entered firſt, and enquired of the landlord, whether my maſter could have a room there? Upon his ſhewing an apartment, I held the door reſpectfully till he and his two companions were entered. I afterwards ordered tea; and I and my huſband waited on them in the moſt reſpectful manner in the world. I had been aſked the name of my maſter in the kitchen; and know, my dear, I had the impertinence to name your huſband;

and

and it was in his name that I hired two chaiſes, in which our gentlemen placed themſelves, and my huſband and I got up behind. I had payed generouſly, ſo that they had not the leaſt ſuſpicion; and as our horſes were excellent, we arrived at Bridgnorth at ſeven o'clock in the morning, an hour when the gaoler and his daughter were certainly faſt aſleep. You may well ſuppoſe, I did not perform this journey behind the chaiſe. Soon after we had got out of the town, I called to the poſtillion to ſtop, becauſe I found myſelf very ill, and my pretended maſter being alone in his chaiſe, had ſuffered me to ride within. I forgot to mention, alſo, that I had ordered a ſpare horſe for my maſter; becauſe he frequently choſe to get out and ride. The poſtillion, who found himſelf embarraſſed with this horſe, told my maſter ſo; and I, by his orders, bid my huſband mount it: ſuch acts of humanity are not uncommon in England; and beſides, I had told the poſtillions, I had one of the beſt maſters in the world, though he was of a very melancholy diſpoſition, which rendered him ſilent whole days together, and that he only travelled to relieve his lowneſs of ſpirits.

This was the firſt moment we had been at liberty to ſpeak to each other without witneſs ſince our laſt misfortune. I opened my lips to aſk pardon of the baron for having made him a partner in my unhappineſs; at the very inſtant, when he teſtified the moſt lively regret, at not having it in his power to put an end to my troubles, at the expence of his own life. If I may truſt what I feel, they are drawing towards a period; and I flatter myſelf, the juſtice of God, ſatisfied with a puniſhment ſo ſevere as I have undergone theſe ſix days, will forget my former ill conduct. You do not yet know your guilty huſband, my dear Clariſſa, whom you complain of having made a partner in your misfortunes. Alas! it is I who ought to tremble for having united you to a wretch, whom divine juſtice has purſued theſe two years. The baron would then have began to inform me of the events which had reduced him to the abject condition in which I found him: I refuſed to hear him: he wanted reſt, and I begged him to endeavour to procure it; and he the more willingly yielded to my requeſt, as he knew I had need of reſt myſelf.

We made ſuch quick diſpatch, that we arrived at Briſtol on the third day, without the leaſt

laſt unlucky accident: we had fetched ſuch a compaſs about in our journey, that it was night when we entered this city. I abridge a recital already too long. As an exception to the rule, the merchant, who was the captain's friend, was the ſon of a French refugee, and yet hated not his countrymen; and as we ſeemed ſurprized at it, he opened a drawer, out of which he took a handſome purſe, which to us ſeemed empty; and, in fact, it contained only a ſmall piece of French money, value about a penny Engliſh, and ſaid to us, I hope this piece will be preſerved in my family from generation to generation. This is the only fortune my father poſſeſſed when he arrived in England, and he hardly left any thing more behind him in France, where he gained his living by the trade of watchmaking. He got money at London by his induſtry, put me apprentice to a merchant, and had the ſatisfaction to ſee me rich before he died. He frequently laughed with me at the folly of his companions. Moſt part of them, ſaid he to me, were, like myſelf, born to wear wooden ſhoes, yet they are perpetually lamenting the fortunes they quitted in France. There was particularly a little toad of a tradeſman, named V——, whoſe father left behind him in France nothing but the vermin which devoured his

fleſh,

fleſh, and who now is worth thirty thouſand pounds ſterling. This little animal had ſuch an hatred for France, that he was almoſt out of his ſenſes at the birth of the dauphin: I myſelf heard him ſay on this occaſion, that he was in hopes the king would have had daughters only; and that a civil-war, on account of the ſucceſſion, would have ſet the whole kingdom in flames. For my part, added my father, I ſhall all my life love my nation and king. Louis XIV. whatever his enemies may ſay, was a good and great prince. Perſecutions were raiſed under the ſanction of his name, but he never knew the exceſs to which they were carried, and we had given reaſon for it. We are republicans through principle, and have never known the bounds between what we owe to God and what we owe our maſters; I do not ſay this becauſe he was the occaſion of my making my fortune, but out of regard to truth.

Our lieutenant, who was a proteſtant, was a little diſpleaſed with this diſcourſe, and proteſted to the merchant, whoſe name was Martineau, that the king of France had no faithfuller ſubjects than the Calviniſts. You are right, with reſpect to the preſent, who are as good Frenchmen as their fathers were bad, becauſe

cauſe they no more read the ſatires and fooliſh ſermons, which enthuſiaſtic medlers publiſhed towards the end of the laſt age; therefore they are now regarded as good and faithful ſubjects, and have juſtice done them.

Pardon me this anecdote, my dear; it is a teſtimony (which I could not help mentioning) of the good underſtanding of our deliverer: he procured us paſſports, and furniſhed the captain with money ſufficient to reimburſe me what I had advanced; which I was obliged to accept, for fear of affronting this honeſt man, who, notwithſtanding the rough behaviour attached to his profeſſion, has a great deal of merit. Nothing can exceed the attention which he and his companions paid to us during our five weeks voyage. I was very ill the firſt ſix days, as well as the baron; ſince this interval we have enjoyed a perfect ſtate of health, and amuſe ourſelves with the recital of the artifices which poor priſoners employ to recover their liberty: it is not aſtoniſhing that they run all riſks to obtain it; they are treated with a barbarity that ſhocks human nature, through the inſatiable avarice of inferior officers who are entruſted with their maintenance: it certainly is not the intention of the government, which

ſuppoſes

ſuppoſes they are treated better. I am drawing up a memorial in their favour, which I ſhall addreſs to the lords of the admiralty; they will ſhudder, I am ſure, at an account which ſeems almoſt incredible, and yet, unhappily, has but too much reality.

We ſet out in two days for Agen, a village, nine leagues diſtant from Bourdeaux, where my mother-in-law reſides, and where I deſire you to direct your anſwer. I expect, with impatience, an account of my mother's eſcape: be her ſecretary, my dear Harriet, if her weakneſs does not permit her to write herſelf. I ſhall ſay no more about my gratitude. I repeat it again, you and your huſband have done ſo much for me, that I can never have it in my power to make you both amends.

LETTER XXVI.

CLARISSA TO MRS. DARBY.

HEAVEN then has reſtored you to my wiſhes, my dear, my tender, and reſpectable mother! What an happineſs for me not to have learnt your danger till after your recovery! I do not think I ſhould have been capable of ſupporting the fear of loſing you for ever, together with all my other misfortunes: conſider them, my dear mother; or, rather, ſtrive to forget them: ſuch thoughts are only proper to rack a heart ſenſible like yours. I muſt own, there are moments in which the dangers I have undergone, are ſo ſtrongly painted on my imagination, that my hair ſtands upright with horror; a cold ſweat creeps over me; and, if I was left to myſelf in theſe dreadful moments, I know not whether nature would not ſink under the terrible impreſſion of this recollection. My huſband, who perceives it, does not leave me an inſtant: the ſight of him throws me into ſentiments ſo oppoſite to thoſe I have juſt deſcribed, that I am aſtoniſhed I have ſtrength to undergo this contraſt. God has conducted me to the greateſt happineſs, by ways ſeemingly very ſtrange. I am not a woman blinded by her

her paſſion, who figures to herſelf imaginary virtues in the object of her tenderneſs. I love, nay more, I loved my huſband from the firſt moment I beheld him; but I dare preſume ſufficiently on myſelf to aſſure you, that his exterior qualities would have cauſed on me only a momentary impreſſion, if he had poſſeſſed them only: he poſſeſſes not only thoſe virtues which are commonly found in thoſe who are called gentlemen, but he carries them to heroiſm. I will give you two examples of this, which, if you pleaſe, ſhall be for yourſelf only; he has reſpected my delicacy. Though nothing eſſential to our union is wanting, Mr. Baker informed me, that ſome formalities were neceſſary in France; the moſt eſſential of which, in my opinion, is your conſent. I have not been able to conſider myſelf as truly married, till theſe formalities are complied with; and he has conſented to live with me in a manner agreeable to this opinion. Another proof of my huſband's noble way of thinking, is, his inſenſibility with reſpect to a misfortune that would have appeared the greateſt in the world to a vulgar mind. I have obſerved to you, that the fear of accidents, prevented my carrying my diamonds about me in my journey from Stafford: we had unnailed the lining of the chaiſe, and hid them

underneath it ſo artfully, that it was impoſſible to have perceived them: you may readily imagine, that, in the confuſion we were in through fear of being ſtopped, it was eaſy for us not to think of theſe jewels; my huſband choſe rather to loſe them entirely, than leave me alone in the open country; ſo that, by ſelling the pearls which I left in pawn at Stafford, I ſhall ſcarcely have two thouſand pounds ſterling. I am only ſenſible of this loſs, from its putting it out of my power to procure independency for all that is dear to me. The baron reproaches me for my uneaſineſs, and thinks me too rich by half; he maintains, that, moderate as you are, we have enough to provide abundantly for all the neceſſary wants of life, and that more would only embarraſs us. Conceal this circumſtance from our friends, I conjure you; Mr. Balfour is not rich, and would conſent to be leſs ſo, if I could reſolve to partake his fortune.

Providence declares itſelf, it ordains I ſhould be poor. I wrote to Mr. Baker when I embarked, and deſired him to direct his anſwer to me at Bourdeax: I have this moment received the letter, and the contents of it are as follow.

You

You know, my dear mama, that my worthy aunt was an Iriſh woman, and that the greateſt part of her eſtates was ſituated in Ireland: my father has claimed them as a Proteſtant; and, as the law gives the inheritance to the neareſt relation, in prejudice even of children, if the firſt changes his religion, and the children remain Catholics, he has ſtripped me of every thing from that quarter. I cheerfully reſign to him all he has taken from me; my whole fear is, that the remainder of my fortune will not be conſiderable enough to engage him to ſacrifice his ſtrong deſire to have us conſidered as parricides: perhaps he will let the action he has brought againſt us ſubſiſt, without proſecuting or annulling the accuſation, with a view of keeping us perpetually abroad. I have informed Mr. Baker, by a letter, that you had a conſiderable ſum concealed in a private cheſt of drawers at Old Windſor, and deſired him to charge ſome truſty perſon to be attentive to what paſſes in that quarter. My father never liked the houſe; he perhaps will ſell it, and diſpoſe of the furniture; I begged of him, if this was the caſe, to buy this cheſt of drawers, which I particularly deſcribed to him, at any price. The Jew, to whom I pledged my necklace, is become a bankrupt; and our witneſs, who had borrowed

the money in his own name, having declared himſelf a creditor, has received only two hundred guineas for 9000l. fifty of which he has expended in ſearching after the carrier whom he procured for us at Stafford: this perſon came from London, and was not known at this town. The baron muſt be contented; he thought my fortune was ſtill too conſiderable: behold it reduced to 24000 French livres, for he will not ſuffer me to part with ſome valuable trinkets I have about me. I have equipped myſelf at Bourdeaux conformable to my preſent condition; no laces, no ſilks; my reſpectable mother-in-law wears none, and I ſhould be ſorry to appear better dreſt than her: he has confeſſed to me, that the little fortune on which ſhe lives, does not exceed twelve guineas a year; he is therefore right in ſaying we are rich with what I ſtill have, ſince this amounts to three times as much. God preſerve me from greater misfortunes than that of being poor; I have not occaſion for a very ſtrong doſe of reſignation to ſupport poverty: ſo little is wanting for the real neceſſaries of life, when we are capable of annihilating imaginary wants.

However violent an inclination I have to embrace you, prudence commands me to repreſs it.

it. My huſband loves his mother infinitely; this ſeems to me a good preſage of his character. Notwithſtanding his filial piety might deceive in this reſpect, magnify his good qualities, and leſſen his defects, I know what duty directs me to do in ſuch a caſe; I muſt accommodate my humour to his; and, through the grace of God, I feel no repugnance in ſubmitting to thoſe he has ordained my ſuperiors; but, my dear mama, I ſhould feel an infinite deal to ſee you ſuffer in the leaſt; you have only the duties of charity and of chriſtian condeſcenſion to fulfil with regard to this lady, and theſe are much leſs extenſive than mine; ſtay then with my friend till you have determined whether you could live agreeably with us. The baron earneſtly deſired me to aſſure you of his affectionate duty; he aſſures me he has not the leaſt uneaſineſs about the peace of our future ſociety; but if it ſhould poſſibly happen not to be perfectly agreeable to you to live with your children, he ſhall be always ready to reſign to you the income of my trifling fortune.

LETTER XXVII.

LADY HARRIET TO CLARISSA.

I AM ignorant how romances are compoſed, my dear, ſince I have never read but one; but, I am very certain, there can be none ſo affecting or intereſting as the hiſtory of your misfortunes. I have followed you in your eſcapes, and into your priſon; I have felt myſelf almoſt ſuffocated in paſſing through the hole made with ſuch diſpatch and labour: in ſhort, my dear, though your letter was dated from a place where you was in ſafety, and that you had ſet ſail the very moment it was directed to me, I could not perſuade myſelf you had ſurmounted all the obſtacles which oppoſed your eſcape. My dear, my charming Clariſſa, paſſing the night in the fields, hoiſted upon a blind-horſe, dragged into a dungeon, laid on ſtraw, among three deſperadoes! For your ſailors, whom I would heartily embrace, if I had them here, were, nevertheleſs, rough unpoliſhed men; witneſs the energy of their expreſſions, which muſt appear very ſtrange to the delicate ears of my incomparable friend. It would doubtleſs have been much worſe if they had been ignorant of your ſex; for I am perſuaded theſe good honeſt ſeamen, at preſent,

preſent, pique themſelves upon the reſerve and politeneſs with which they behaved in your preſence. I would lay a good wager, from the knowledge I have of your diſpoſition, that you will accuſe me of injuſtice on reading this: you are accuſtomed to ſee people on the bright ſide, and to forget whatever might leſſen your good opinion of them. Oh! I do not oppoſe this good opinion. Have not I told you, I would embrace them heartily? Then, you know, that I embrace thoſe only whom I love. Yet, this good friendſhip ſhall not prevent my thinking you were not made for this ſort of company; and at the ſecond reading of your letter, I could not help laughing whenever you called them my companions. A fine expreſſion in the mouth of my Clariſſa! It coſt me tears at firſt, becauſe I was not thoroughly ſatisfied you were eſcaped from this priſon; four and twenty hours were neceſſary to convince me of it, and from that inſtant, I re-aſſumed all my former good humour. I don't know what would have bore up my ſpirits againſt tempeſts and accidents, if you had been forced to paſs the Streights of Gibraltar. I ſhould have perpetually fancied I ſaw you fall into the hands of Corſairs. In the rout you took, you only run the riſk of being a priſoner of war in France: a trifling misfortune

for the wife of a Frenchman. At laſt, you are happily arrived in your new country, with an huſband worthy of you. What extraordinary events lead thereto! Might it not be ſaid, Heaven has preſerved you, and would not leave to man the care of providing for you? How happy are we, my dear Clariſſa! we have no need of a paſſion which time diminiſhes, to be enchanted with our lot, and reaſon applauds our ſentiments in favour of our huſbands. Aſſure yourſelf theſe two men render all others contemptible, in my mind, and that I find them a parcel of poor wretches: ſome day I will amuſe myſelf with pointing out to you the characters of the greateſt part I ſee, and you will acknowledge that their poor ribs would be very excuſeable in being jealous of our fate.

I muſt own to you, my dear, a fooliſh thought which has come into my head. Could it be an effect of jealouſy? It was in ſpeaking of this hideous paſſion that I recollected this extravagant thought. I have read over and over again all the letters you have wrote me ſince our ſeparation; I have weighed all your words, all your actions, to ſee if I could not find out ſome one, to which I might attribute ſuch ſtrange misfortunes. Is it ſpite, at finding you ſo ſuperior to

your poor Harriet, who ſeeks to find you in fault, to raiſe herſelf at your expence? Alas! if my pride had this fine idea without my knowledge, it has been paid for it according to its deſerts. I have endeavoured to turn and twiſt you every way; but I have found you yourſelf in every thing, even in a very critical circumſtance. To explain myſelf, if I had been in a like ſituation, I don't know whether I ſhould have had the courage to ſacrifice a prejudice to my reputation. We have two ſorts of it, my dear: that which concerns the morals, prudence and modeſty; and there are few women of a certain rank, who, having been well educated, put themſelves in danger through their own fault of loſing this: our other reputation is that of the mind, of our underſtanding, of a certain haughtineſs of ſentiment, which we call nobleneſs of ſpirit; there is a great number of women who are ſtill more jealous of this ſecond reputation than of the firſt. I improve amazingly ſince I am at Paris, except in the art of writing intelligibly; for I very much doubt your underſtanding this nonſenſe: an example will render it more intelligible: we hardly dare to deſpiſe the miſtreſs of a king; the nobleneſs of her choice juſtifies it. This woman, who does not bluſh at the ſhameful title, would have hid herſelf from the whole

if ſhe had married her footman, though he were the honeſteſt man in the world, and the moſt capable of making her happy. Even though ſhe were under the greateſt obligations to him, all theſe motives would not in the leaſt excuſe her choice; the moſt favourable would ſay, ſhe had a vulgar ſoul, and had been guilty of a meanneſs: nevertheleſs, in fact, it is better to be the wife of the loweſt plebeian, than the miſtreſs of a king; we therefore ſet more value on what is called greatneſs of ſoul, than on virtue. You have judged otherwiſe; you have preferred the reputation of a modeſt prudent girl, to that of a girl of noble ſentiments: your virtue might perhaps have been ſuſpected, if you had travelled about in company with an amiable young man; and you have rather choſe to be ſuſpected of poſſeſſing ſentiments leſs exalted than your birth: you are therefore an heroine, the Lucretia of the age, and the antient one does not deſerve to be compared with you. I ſhould not ſay ſo much if you had thrown yourſelf into the danger, or if you had had any other means of eſcaping the crime which your father endeavoured to force you to commit. Alſo God, who ſaw the purity of your motives, has made uſe of your misfortunes to elevate you to the height of good fortune;

he

he conducts you ſo viſibly, that I can no more find fault with the intention in which you perſevere, with regard to your fortune: abandon it to —— ſhould I ſay your father? Yes; another name, which was at my tongue's end, would ſhock your delicacy. Set the world an example of moderation. Sanctify, ennoble a middling condition, a ſtate of poverty if you will; we leave you at full liberty in this reſpect, provided you permit us to take all the precautions we think neceſſary, to ſecure the fortune of your children.

You comprehend, by this diſcourſe, that your mother has not judged it proper to keep the ſecret you required of her; it is true, ſhe would not acquaint us with it but under very hard conditions; we have ſubſcribed thereto, do not complain in the leaſt. Juſtice requires you ſhould, in this reſpect, truſt to the judgment and conduct of my lord. What right have you to diſinherit your children before their birth? How do you fulfil the intentions of your dear aunt? Did ſhe leave you her fortune to be diſſipated in debauchery? I have at laſt found out the foible of my Clariſſa's conduct; ſeduced by an apparent good, ſhe has committed a real fault. I acknowledge, few girls would have been

been capable of committing ſuch a fault; but it is one, notwithſtanding, and muſt be repaired. Hear what your mother ſays on this ſubject; you have no right to miſtruſt her counſel, or to diſobey her orders.

Mrs. DARBY *writes.*

YES, my dear daughter, the virtues have bounds which we cannot exceed without falling into criminal extremes. I ſhall never recollect, without ſhedding tears of tenderneſs, that, to my ſafety, my Clariſſa has ſacrificed her immenſe fortune; that ſhe has joined to this motive, ſo worthy of admiration, that of healing an heart imbittered againſt her, by the preference that has been given to her. Let my virtuous daughter prove to her father, that he owes to her filial duty only, the gift ſhe has made him. Eaſy about my fate, let her not alter her firſt reſolution, but confine herſelf to the loſs of the income of her fortune, without giving up her property in it. In ſpite of the law, which gives it to your father, my dear Clariſſa, Mr. Balfour has an infallible method to oblige him to reſign this property, and reſtore it to you; this is an act of juſtice which you cannot oppoſe, without becoming culpable. Do not imagine poverty terrifies

rifies me for my dear child and her poſterity; if God gives her children worthy of her, they will always be rich enough; if an earthquake, bankruptcies, or other accidents, which ſeem to come immediately from God, ſhould annihilate all your poſſeſſions, as the loſs could not be attributed to you, it would neither coſt me a tear, or occaſion a ſingle ſigh. Leave Providence to ſtrip your children, if they put your fortune to an ill uſe; join your ſincere prayers with mine to beg it of God, but do not in the leaſt aſſiſt to deprive them of it yourſelf.

Do not upbraid me with having diſcloſed your ſituation to Mr. Balfour; I firſt obtained the moſt inviolable promiſe from him not to endeavour to change it; but by ſuch ways as cannot poſſibly call a bluſh in your face. His word, more than the preſent ſtate of his fortune, places bounds to his generoſity; and he will ſuffer you to enjoy the chriſtian pleaſure of being poor, whatever it coſts him: he requires, as a recompence for the violence he does himſelf in this reſpect, that I will not leave his wife during his journey to London about your affairs. I approve of your reflections concerning too precipitate a re-union. If unfortunately you may have reaſon to think I ſhould not be able to agree

agree with your huſband's mother, nothing ſhall prevent my ſettling in your neighbourhood; and I had rather be accuſed of oddity, for being ſo near you, without living in your family, than run the riſk of diſturbing your domeſtic peace. I ſhall not even be under a neceſſity of leſſening your poor pittance; Providence has provided for my ſubſiſtence. Poor Mrs. Coſby has thought it her duty to leave me what little ſhe had; which, added to the ſale of my trinkets that I wore the day you was torn from my arms, makes double the ſum you poſſeſs. Whatever deſire I have to embrace you, another motive ſtill keeps me at Paris till next ſpring. I could not refuſe the intreaties of my ſecond daughter. You are ſurprized, my dear Clariſſa! you do not know of any ſiſter: I flatter myſelf, notwithſtanding, that you will not diſapprove the addition I have made to my family. You have taken the liberty to give me a ſon, why ſhould I refuſe to accept a ſecond daughter? I have done it the more willingly, as I am perſuaded you will cheerfully approve my adoption of your Harriet; and what daughter, excepting Clariſſa, could have carried her affection for me farther? Has ſhe not riſked her life to preſerve mine? I ſhall not undertake to particularize her marks of tenderneſs; I tell you

all

all, in ſaying, that you could not have done more than her. There is another account which you expect from me; I am about to ſatisfy you, and acquaint you with things which cannot fail of intereſting you.

Lady HARRIET *continues.*

YES, my dear ſiſter, I have at laſt the happineſs of a mother, and I don't know if I could poſſibly have had more tenderneſs and reſpect for her whom God deprived me of before I was of a ſufficient age to know her, than I have for her he has now given me. No jealouſy: if you pleaſe, you ſhall be the eldeſt; I yield to you the firſt place in her heart. I conſent, ſhe loves you a little better than me, on condition you permit me to love her as well as you do yourſelf: your ſiſter holds the pen, Clariſſa; but it it is your mother dictates.

Recollect, my child, the pleaſure with which I ſaw the time arrive, when your fate was to be fixed: you have only known the joy your marriage gave me; you are ignorant how much it coſt me to reconcile myſelf to this eſtabliſhment. The figure of Montalvo was amiable; his mind was cultivated; his heart ſeemed excellent; he

was

was of a great family, and his fortune ſurpaſſed my utmoſt wiſhes; yet, in ſpite of all theſe advantages, I felt at firſt ſight an antipathy for him, which I thought unjuſt, becauſe it had no reaſonable foundation. I therefore endeavoured to combat, ſurmount, or juſtify it. I examined this man with the eyes of a mother, who fears for all that is dear to her; and, there were moments, when I ſuſpected a myſtery I could not penetrate. I ſurprized your lover in melancholy fits, which did not ſeem natural in a perſon of his age, whoſe ſituation was entirely agreeable; the care he took to conceal his melancholly, as ſoon as he perceived my intention to examine him, increaſed my ſuſpicions. I learnt from himſelf (and the ſequel ſhews he ſpoke the truth) that he could not ſucceed to quiet his remorſe. Montalvo had always been virtuous; a want of vigilance, had occaſioned his committing a firſt fault; which, having thrown him into deſpair, had obliged him to quit his ſtate. He wanted courage to confeſs this to him, who had always the care of his conſcience; and the fear of committing ſacrilege, had determined him to make his eſcape. We advance a great pace in the road of guilt, when we have the misfortune to engage therein. The poiſonous diſcourſe of perſons, who were dear to him,

aſſiſte

aſſiſted to ſtifle his conſcience; his faith grew weak, he thought it extinct; and flattered himſelf he had erected a wall of braſs, between him and his conſcience; and did not know he was miſtaken, till the moment, the guilty union, which was to ſecure his fortune and your unhappineſs, was propoſed to him. He was ſhocked to the laſt degree, at this propoſal; and you could not have refrained from tears, at the recital of the torments he endured. He went out of the houſe like a diſtracted man; and wandered a long while about London ſtreets, without knowing where he went. I am endeavouring to recollect the picture he drew of his ſituation; and to make uſe of his own terms.

After having walked a great way, ſays he to me, a numerous crowd forced me to ſlacken my pace. It was a holiday; and, by the ſinging of prieſts, I found I was near a chapel; and, that all thoſe, who were near, waited for the finiſhing of high-maſs, to enter. It was not poſſible for me to continue my rout; my trembling knees ſhook under me; and I was forced to reſt myſelf againſt a wall, to prevent my falling down. How happy are theſe people! ſays I, caſting my eyes on this crowd: in a few minutes they go with joy, to unboſom their hearts at the foot

foot of the altar: and I, wretch that I am! have drove myſelf from the ſanctuary of mercy. This reflection threw me into a deep melancholly; I wept bitterly, and felt ſuch an exceſſive uneaſineſs of mind, as is impoſſible to be expreſſed. I was well dreſſed, and attracted the attention of a woman, who was near me. I fancy, Sir, ſays ſhe, you are not well, the ſun may increaſe your diſorder; follow me, and I will procure you entrance through the ambaſſador's houſe; for you ſeem a ſtranger, and, perhaps, don't know the way. The voice of this woman ſeemed to me an order from Heaven, which I dared not reſiſt; I followed her with the thoughts of a criminal, whom the officers of juſtice conduct before his judge. She ſpoke to the porter, and he opened a door, which led to the chapel by a private ſtair-caſe. When I had got to the top of the ſtairs, my terrors encreaſed to ſuch a degree, that I had not courage to enter. I ſat down on a little bench in the paſſage in ſight of the altar; I was alone in this obſcure place; and abandoned myſelf without reſtraint to all the impetuoſity of my emotions. I hid my eyes with my hands, as if to conceal my face from my angry judge; I ſhed abundance of tears; and doubt not but I drew the attention of thoſe near me; for, indeed,

deed, I ſobbed bitterly. I remained above a quarter of an hour in this ſituation, almoſt inſenſible; I was as it were annihilated: I, at length, by degrees, came to myſelf; and viewing the immenſe diſtance which I had placed between God and me, I felt ſo cutting an anguiſh, that I thought my heart would have broke. You may imagine, perhaps, that theſe motions of grace worked my converſion? You are miſtaken. Alas! how eaſy it is to commit ſin! and how difficult to return to virtue! It is certain I deteſted mine, and would have ſacrificed my life at this moment to have annulled them; but yet, when I thought of the means to expiate them; I felt, as it were, tied, bent down, attached to the earth, without ſtrength to aſſiſt the violent impulſe, which cauſed me to deteſt them. Several perſons received the ſacrament. O my God! I exclaimed, from the bottom of my heart, take my life; let it end, if neceſſary, in the moſt cruel torments; ſo that I have the happineſs to receive you once more, without committing ſacrilege. I paſſed about an hour in this ſituation; and full of indignation againſt myſelf, I offered this prayer with an ardor, that I never in my life felt before; Lord, give me ſtrength to break my chains, or take my life. It is a terrible thing to fall into the

the hands of thy juſtice; nevertheleſs, I deſire rather to deliver myſelf thereto, than continue to live in ſin. I felt myſelf eaſier after this ejaculation; I fancied God had heard me favourably; and I aroſe with a firm reſolution not to conſent to the ſacrilegious union which was propoſed to me. I was ſo altered when I returned home to my mother's, that ſhe was frightened. Mr. Darby, whom I would have acquainted with the occaſion of it, laughed at my ſcruples; and told me, I muſt reſolve to attend him immediately after dinner. I ſhall not repeat the impieties he uttered to fortify my ſtaggered conſcience; they did not make ſo great an impreſſion on me, as the dreadful picture of my ſituation, if I refuſed to enter into his views. What would you do in your community? ſays he: for you muſt either return there, or periſh with hunger in London. You will there meet with the worſt uſage; and when your apoſtacy is thought ſufficiently expiated, and you are releaſed from a tedious and cloſe confinement, you will find yourſelf without the leaſt conſideration in your order, and without eſteem. Your flight is a blot, which will be never effaced, unleſs you go to la Trappe *.

* A Carthuſian monaſtery, which practiſes the greateſt auſteritie.

A couple

A couple of years there will do your buſineſs; and you will die a martyr to a ridiculous opinion; a phantom decorated with a fine name, and which frightens women only, or thoſe like them.

This frightful view weakened the ſalutary impulſes, which the mercy of God had excited in my ſoul. I ſuffered myſelf to be drawn away, and the ſight of the charming Clariſſa contributed to ſtifle them entirely. I expreſs myſelf badly; my remorſe ſeemed to gain new ſtrength, in proportion as I endeavoured to overcome it; and I frequently declared to my father, I ſhould never have force to reſiſt it: this induced him to haſten the ceremony, which was to ſeal my crimes.

I have much weakened, I am certain, the pathetic of Montalvo's diſcourſe. I ſhall never forget the impreſſion it made on me; and I am ſenſible I cannot put it to paper. His ſtruggles with grace cauſed thoſe emotions in him, which did not eſcape me, though I could not gueſs at their cauſe. Yet my diſlike of him did not diminiſh, and I was angry with myſelf for it. I found him one day at the end of the garden, wrapped up in a profound reverie; I was cloſe to

to him before he perceived me; and not having time to ſhut a book, which lay open near him; he endeavoured to conceal it from my ſight, by ſitting upon it. I am not naturally curious; and I was aſtoniſhed at my violent deſire to ſee what he endeavoured to hide. We were familiar enough, for him not to be offended at the trick I had a mind to play him. I let my ſnuff-box fall, and, while he attempted to pick it up, I opened the book, and was ſurpriſed to find it St. Auguſtin's Confeſſions, which he had taken from the book-caſe. He bluſhed at ſeeing the book in my hands; and I, tranſported with joy, attributed this confuſion to a laudable modeſty; on which I paid him a compliment. This accident having determined the ſubject of our converſation, he talked of the happineſs of innocence, of the difficulty of recovering it when loſt, like a man affected by the truths of religion. From this inſtant, my repugnance for him ceaſed, and gave way to very oppoſite ſentiments. I looked upon your marriage with him as a ſingular favour of Heaven. I flattered myſelf the friendſhip of Mr. Darby for the perſon who was to be his ſon-in-law, would be the means, through God, of his converſion; and ever ſince, I wiſhed to haſten your marriage with one whom I thought ſo deſerving of eſteem.

eſteem. Judge my ſurpriſe, at your exclamation, when he approached to ſupport you, when you was ready to faint on entering the room. As I could not imagine what could have cauſed ſuch an alteration in your ideas, within a quarter of an hour, I own I was afraid you was a little diſordered in your mind. The words of your father removed this idea. He complained of having been betrayed; there muſt be then ſome ſecret which had came to your knowledge. I had not time to endeavour to gueſs the nature of it; I could only tremble for my dear child. You ſpoke to the miniſter who came forward to marry you, with ſo majeſtic an air, that you ſeemed ſomething more than human: your menaces ſtruck him motionleſs; but Montalvo's moment of mercy was come; he was affected by them in ſuch a manner, that he fancied a ſtorm of lightning ſuſpended over his head; and that a fixed reſolution of repairing his crimes, could alone prevent the ſtroke; he formed it, and had ſcarcely conceived the deſign before he felt himſelf like a man freed from a heavy burden which oppreſſed him. His knowledge of your father's ſentiments, forced him to diſſemble his own; and in the private diſcourſe they had together at the end of the room, he employed no other motive to engage him to

deſiſt from uſing force, than the fear of making a noiſe. Your cries might awaken the ſervants, and he would be obliged either to abandon his deſign, or afford you an infallible opportunity to complain of the violence he offered you. To avoid this inconvenience he conducted you to a place where your cries could not be heard; and to have nothing to fear from my ſide, he had the cruelty to ſtop my mouth with an handkerchief, and drag me into a diſtant room, where he faſtened me ſtrongly. I ſay, he dragged me, and it literally was ſo. I laid hold of every thing I met with in the way: I was furious as a lioneſs robbed of her whelps; and having graſped a baniſter of the ſtair-caſe, I held it ſo faſt, that Mr. Darby could not poſſibly force me to quit my hold. Furious at my reſiſtance, he left me n the hands of Montalvo, and ran to fetch his ſword with a deſign to run me through the bo-ly. For God's ſake, madam, ſays this young man, pay ſome regard to what I ſay; yield to a violence which might have irreparable conſequences. I call Heaven, the avenger of perjury, to witneſs that I will find a way to deliver you and Clariſſa too. I thought I diſcovered an air of truth in Montalvo's oath, which forced me, to uſe the expreſſion, to ſurrender myſelf to his management; Heaven doubtleſs permitted it,

for it was not natural I ſhould truſt to his promiſes in ſuch circumſtances. He threw himſelf on Mr. Darby, who had drawn his ſword to run me through; and my reſiſtance having ceaſed, he chained me to the floor as I have already told you. Oh! my dear child, what aſſiſtance from Heaven had I not occaſion for in theſe dreadful circumſtances, to prevent my falling a prey to deſpair? I was under the moſt dreadful apprehenſions for you; I gnawed my fleſh; I ſtruggled to break my bonds; I uttered uſeleſs cries, ſince my mouth was ſtopped with an handkerchief. In ſhort, I conſider the preſervation of my life and reaſon as a miracle. After ſome hours were elapſed, my ſpirits became a little more quiet; I had the happy thought of lifting up my eyes towards the celeſtial regions, and indeed from thence alone I could expect aſſiſtance. I recollected, with trembling, that by an uſeleſs reſiſtance, I might have made myſelf an accomplice of the homicide who was going to kill me. Ah! what would have become of my ſoul, if I had rendered it up to my Creator, in the midſt of the dreadful tranſports with which I was agitated? They were not voluntary, it is true; but their violence declared, that this reſignation to the will of God, which I flattered myſelf I poſſeſſed,

was very weak. I did not ſuffer myſelf to be caſt down with this humiliating reflection; I was convinced of the imperfection of my virtue, and made the greateſt efforts to repair my weakneſs, by a courageous ſubmiſſion to what God ſhould pleaſe to ordain concerning us. I conſidered you under his immediate protection, tho' all human ſuccour was denied us; and my confidence began to revive. I endeavoured to ſtrengthen myſelf in this confidence, when I heard a diſpute at my chamber door, and plainly diſtinguiſhed the voices of James and Montalvo. The firſt kept the keys of my room, and refuſed to deliver them to Montalvo, who inſiſted on having them. This deſire of opening my priſon doors, ſeemed to me a conſequence of his oath; at laſt, Montalvo loſing all patience, laid hold of a large piece of wood which he found near him, and with redoubled blows, attempted to break the door open. As this apartment was inhabited by this ſervant only, its repair had been neglected; and as it was old, the door ſoon gave way. Montalvo ran to me, and whilſt he cut the handkerchief off my face which almoſt ſuffocated me, ſaid, Madam, your daughter is in a place of ſafety; we muſt get the ſtart of Mr. Darby's return, who has purſued her in vain, and follow her. Do not deceive me, Montalvo,

talvo, ſays I, in a feeble voice: leave me to die here, if your intention is to ſeparate me from my child; death is near at hand to free me from your cruelty: in fact, I found myſelf ſo exhauſted, that I thought my laſt hour was come. And what place could be ſo proper to remove you from your daughter as this? replies he. All the ſervants except James think you have fled with her. It is not in the middle of the night, by ſtealth, that I mean to take you away; a poſt-chaiſe waits at the door; chuſe, to conduct you, any perſon in the village whom you think you can beſt truſt; order him to carry you where you pleaſe in London. If my company is ſuſpicious, I will leave you alone; though as I have ſome ſad ſecrets to reveal, I hope you will ſuffer me to join you there. I was aſhamed of having diſtruſted a man who acted with ſuch openneſs; and my ſuſpicions entirely vaniſhed, when I heard James exclaim that Montalvo had betrayed his maſter: he was in ſuch a rage, that I thought he would have fell into convulſions. I am reſolved to accompany you, ſaid I to Montalvo; and at the ſame time put to rights my cloaths and head-dreſs which were in diſorder, and gave him my hand. I found the chaiſe, ſurrounded by the whole village, whom James excited to ſtop my paſſage, by

exclaiming that I was a wicked woman, ſince I willingly made my eſcape with a raviſher. His endeavours were fruitleſs; the people made way for me to get into the chaiſe, and I heard from every mouth, God bleſs you, as well as madam Clariſſa. I reaped the fruits of your beneficence, my dear child; and, notwithſtanding the confuſion and affliction I was in, the bleſſings of theſe poor people, who loudly proclaimed the charities you had beſtowed on them, agreeably flattered my ear.

When we were out of the village, Montalvo requeſted my orders a ſecond time; and as I knew nobody at London but the miſtreſs of the houſe where we lodged ſome time, I deſired him to conduct me there. Our chaiſe went ſurpriſingly faſt; and I am perſuaded, we were not more than an hour and an half on our journey. I had counted the mile ſtones, and we were no more than five miles diſtant from London, when we turned out of the main road towards the right. Do not be ſurprized, madam, ſays Montalvo, that I quit the uſual road; we might meet Mr. Darby in the environs of London; I am even perſuaded he waits at the turnpike to ſtop miſs Clariſſa, ſo that I am obliged to go a good deal round about to avoid him.

him. Ah, Heavens! cried I, have you not aſſured me my dear child was in ſafety? He does not know it, replies Montalvo, and thinks ſhe has taken the road to the capital; but, madam, ſuffer me to repeat the favour I begged of you, to ſuſpend your curioſity till you arrive at the aſylum you have choſe. He had eluded my queſtions twenty times, and not being able to get him to anſwer me, I had been ſilent till now. If I had been capable of any uneaſineſs about myſelf, I ſhould perhaps have ſuſpected my guide, for we paſſed thro' very bye places: at laſt I perceived the ſpires of Weſtminſter, and immediately entered the outſkirts, and ſoon arrived at the houſe I had mentioned; I expected to hear of you there, at leaſt. Montalvo begged me to permit him to leave me half an hour, and promiſed to acquaint me afterwards with what I was ſo deſirous of knowing. Oh! my poor child, how long did this half hour ſeem! but my impatience was inſupportable, when I found hours elapſe without hearing of Montalvo: he arrived at laſt. Madam, ſays he, accoſting me, I would willingly have brought you more poſitive news; but all I can aſſure you is, that miſs Clariſſa has eſcaped her father's purſuit, witneſs the rage in which I found him at Mrs. Coſby's. Mrs. Coſby in Lon-

London! cried I. At theſe words, Montalvo, throwing himſelf at my feet, declared every thing that is contained in this letter, and ended thus: it was five o'clock in the morning, when miſs Clariſſa's footſteps were diſcovered in the garden; and, according to all appearance, ſhe had eſcaped ſeveral hours before. I conceived, from your huſband's diſcourſe, that your life was not ſafe; yet, with a view of ſcreening his innocent daughter from his firſt fury, I did not chuſe to loſe ſight of him. There is not a village within ſix miles round, where we have not made an enquiry: one woman only told us, ſhe met miſs Clariſſa at day-break. We went to the next village, but could get no intelligence of her, whence I concluded ſhe had luckily met with ſome carriage. Mr. Darby thought the ſame, and without conſidering ſhe had the ſtart of him by two hours, flattered himſelf he ſhould overtake her with a horſe already jaded, and declared he would give a deſcription of her to the turnpikes. I applauded a deſign, which I could not hinder, and muſt acknowledge I was not void of fear during the whole purſuit. I offered him to continue the ſearch myſelf, and flew to your ſuccour. We were to meet at my mother's. I there met him, foaming with rage, damning thoſe who had made

made ſuch a well-conducted project, and ſo near a concluſion, prove abortive; and not being able to imagine how it was diſcovered, he told me he would immediately return to Windſor, and put you to the torture, to find out whether you knew any any thing of it, or where your daughter was gone. He was ſcarcely gone, before my mother with tears deplored her misfortune, in being concerned in ſuch odious projects, and threatened me with the wrath of Heaven, if I did not riſk every thing to ſave you from the danger which threatened you. Her ſorrow ſeemed ſo natural, added Montalvo, that I owned to her what I had juſt done: ſhe teſtified ſuch marks of joy at the news, as thoroughly convinced me ſhe really deteſted her errors; and the caution ſhe adviſed, clearly ſhewed how very deſirous ſhe was of repairing her faults. She provided a truſty perſon to watch Mr. Darby, and ordered him to ſtay at the inn, and give us the earlieſt intelligence of miſs Clariſſa. After the departure of this man, my mother acquainted me that ſhe was the perſon who informed this innocent young lady of the ſacrilege ſhe was on the point of committing: ſhe has the utmoſt deſire to throw herſelf at your feet, to beg pardon for all the misfortunes ſhe has occaſioned you. Think,

madam,

madam, whether you can pardon two wretches, who with joy would ſpill the laſt drop of their blood, to put an end to your unhappineſs?

Ah! every thing is pardoned and forgot, cried I: ſhe repays with uſury every thing I have done for her, ſince ſhe has ſaved my poor child. Alas! what is become of this dear child? Who will reſtore her to her diſtracted mother? who will ſtrengthen me againſt the fear of ſeeing her again, in the power of her barbarous tyrant? After a thouſand other lamentations, which melted Montalvo, I deſired him to conduct me to his mother's; he would not conſent to it. Who knows, replied he, but ſome unfortunate accident may bring your huſband back there. I was ſenſible of the imprudence I was going to commit, and when this penitent came to me, I would not permit her to mention any paſt circumſtances; and we buſied ourſelves only in conſulting what ſteps to take. She confirmed what I knew before too well, that your father is implacable in his hatred, and capable of runing all riſks to ſatisfy it. She convinced me, that Montalvo had every thing to fear from his reſentment, and begged of me to permit him to partake of my aſylum. You are ſenſible, my child, I could not refuſe them this favour; the repentance

repentance of theſe two criminals, had entirely effaced their faults in the eyes of God; I hoped ſo at leaſt, and ſhould I harbour the leaſt reſentment againſt them? Alas! my heart deteſted the thought, and I could ſay on the contrary, they were become dear to me. Nevertheleſs, my uneaſineſs about your fate increaſed every moment. Montalvo at his return, told me a circumſtance which quieted my fears a little. Mr. Darby had publiſhed a reward of an hundred guineas for any perſon who would diſcover you: this promiſe had produced no effect; therefore, you had got to London, or perhaps were gone to France; you was ſure of meeting with an aſylum with your friend. I greedily ſwallowed this hope; one circumſtance only prevented my being ſatisfied entirely with it. I knew your tenderneſs, and could hardly believe that you would have quitted England, without firſt being acquainted with my fate. And it is the lively intereſt ſhe takes therein, ſays Montalvo, which has hurried her departure. What could your tender daughter do for you, when her virtue obliges her to reſpect your common perſecutor? Has ſhe not judged you had need of a more powerful protection; and, do you think ſhe has neglected that of a man who too well knows what your huſband is capable of, to be aſtoniſhed at

the dreadful confidence ſhe muſt be obliged to repoſe in him? Yes, madam, Miſs Clariſſa is either in France, or in ſome family of honour, from whence ſhe will not fail writing to lady Harriet. The clergyman who was the inſtrument of God to ſtrengthen Mrs. Coſby in her good reſolutions, confirmed Montalvo's conjectures, and adviſed me to follow my daughter. If ſhe is in France, ſays he to me, you will ſoon be reunited. If ſhe is ſtill in England, Mr. Balfour will have the generoſity to fly to her aſſiſtance. Theſe conſiderations ſtaggered me; our expreſs, who returns to-morrow, will determine my reſolution. It is certain Mr. Darby has had no news of you; I therefore think you ſaved from his purſuits, and I ſet out. You know the reſt, my dear child; the goodneſs and attention of my new children is beyond expreſſion. Mr. Balfour leaves us in a few days; I ſhall not quit his wife, till ſhe is happily recovered from her lying-in, and I have had the honour of ſtanding god-mother to the child, agreeable to her requeſt.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

BRITISH
13 OC 77
MUSEUM